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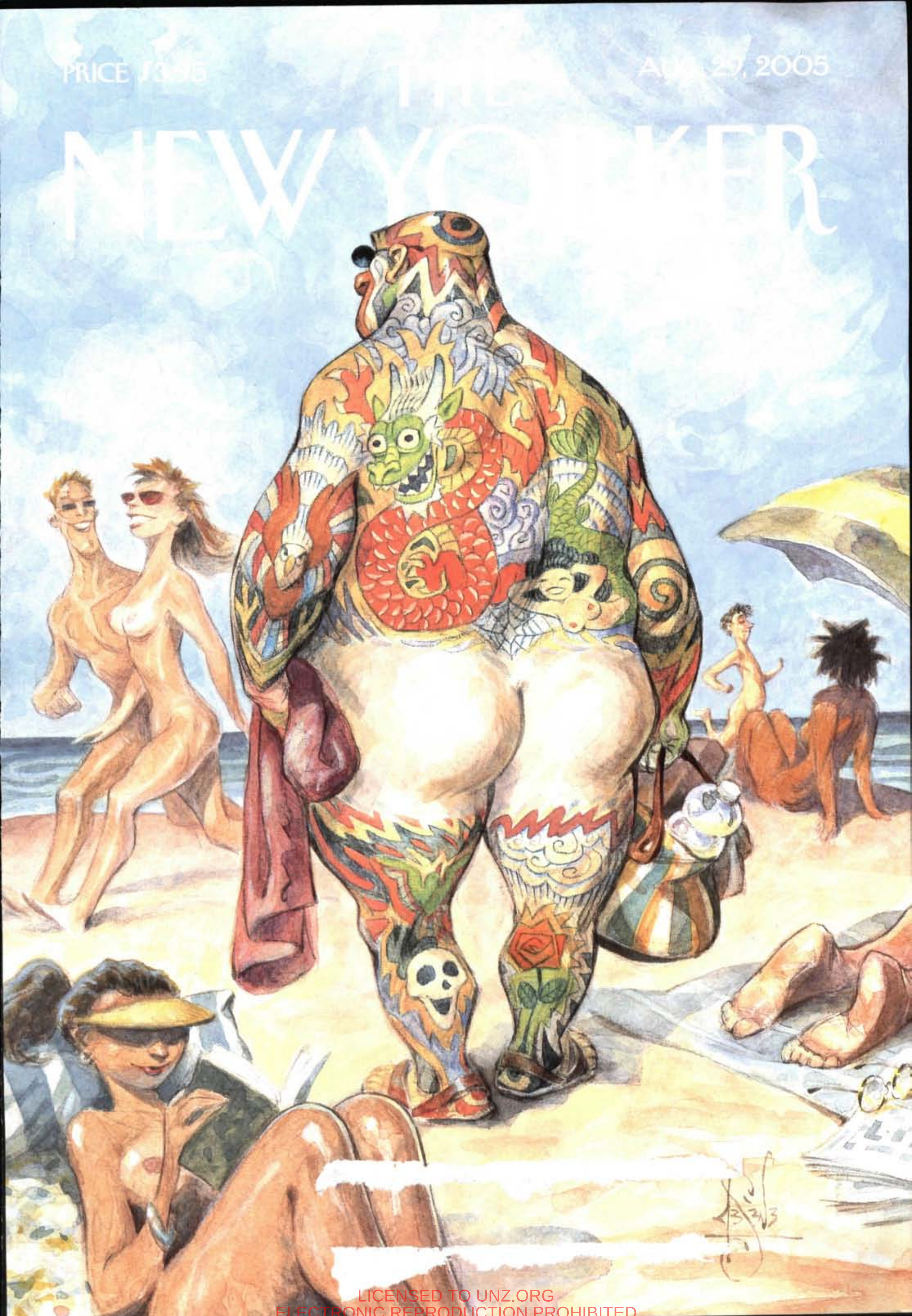

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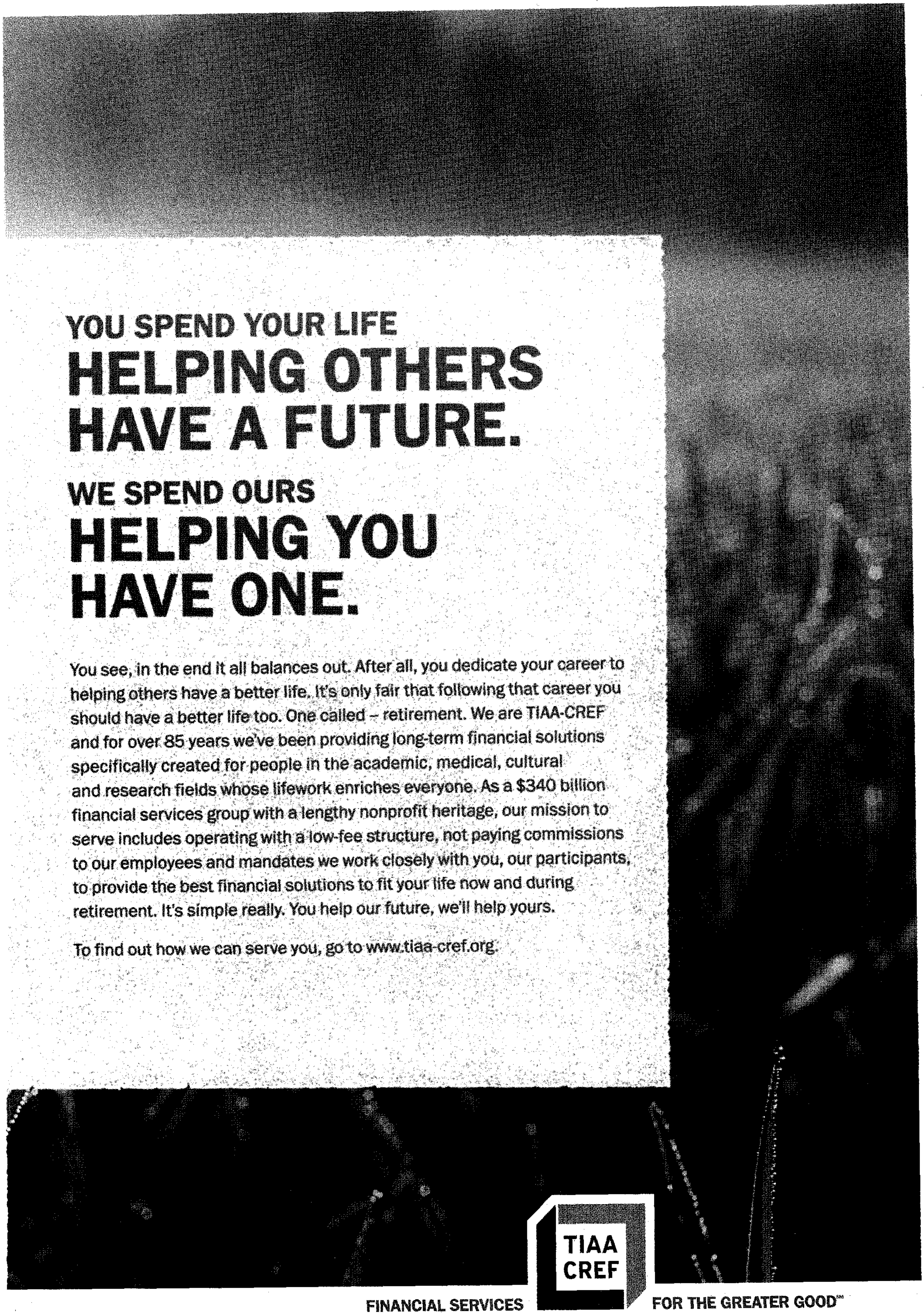

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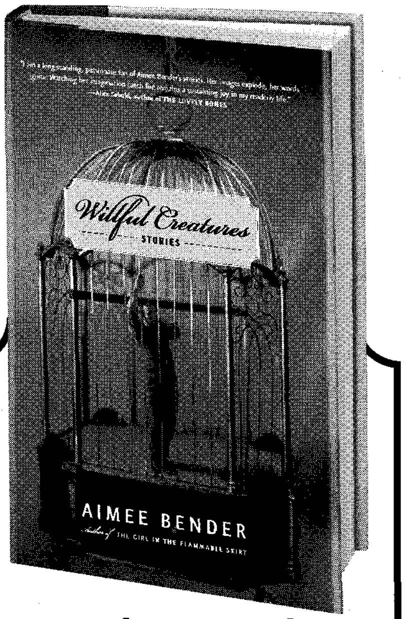

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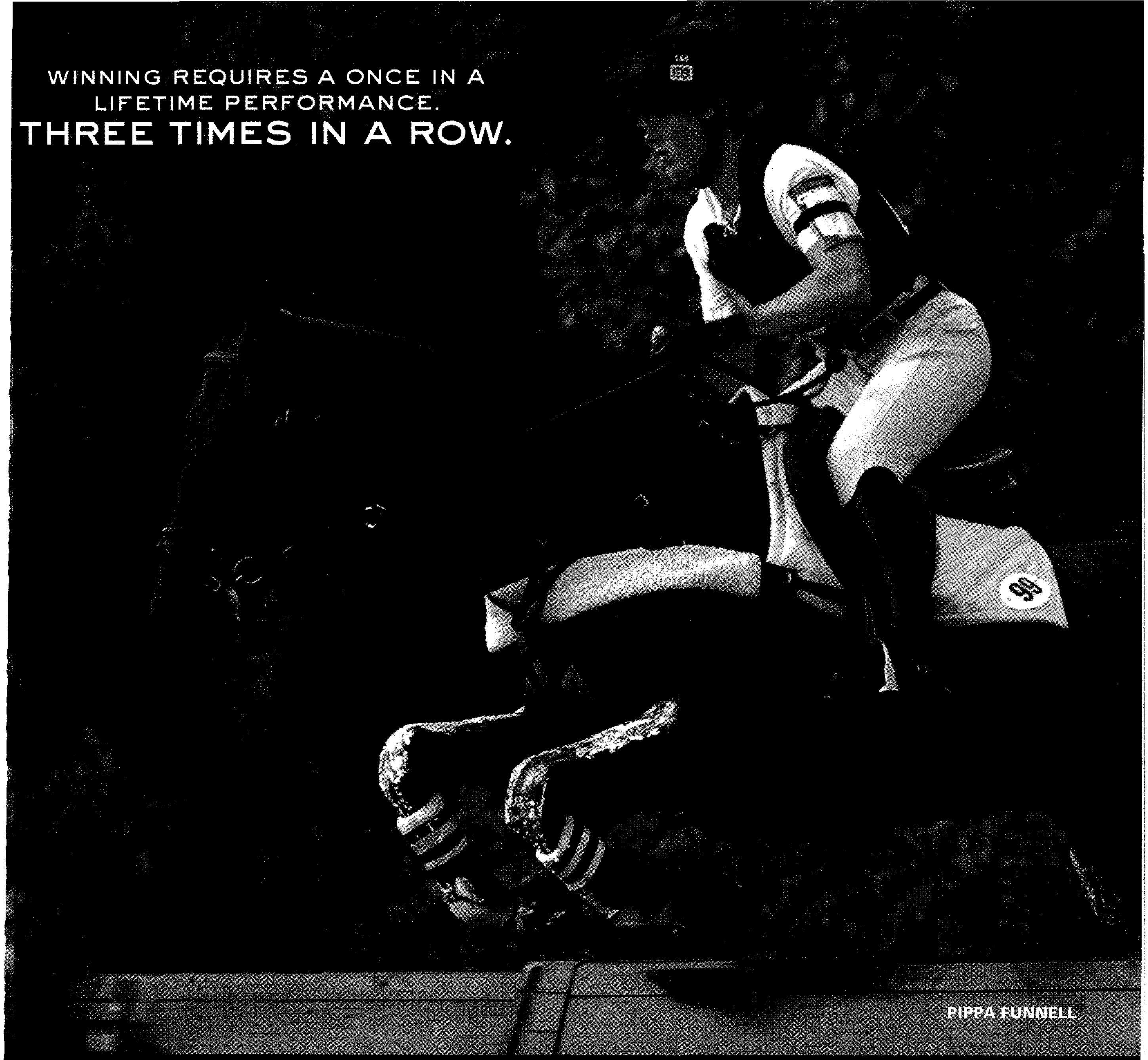
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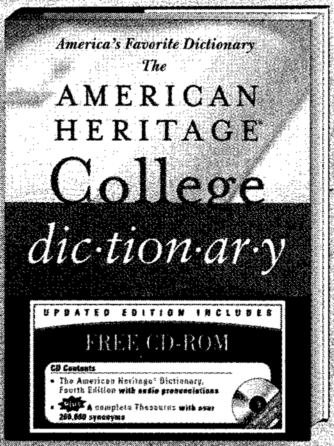

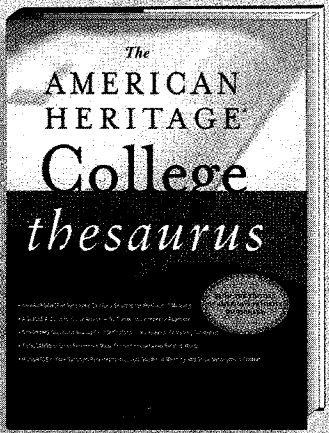

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Peter de Sève (Cover) is working on drawings for the second volume of his "Sketchbook."

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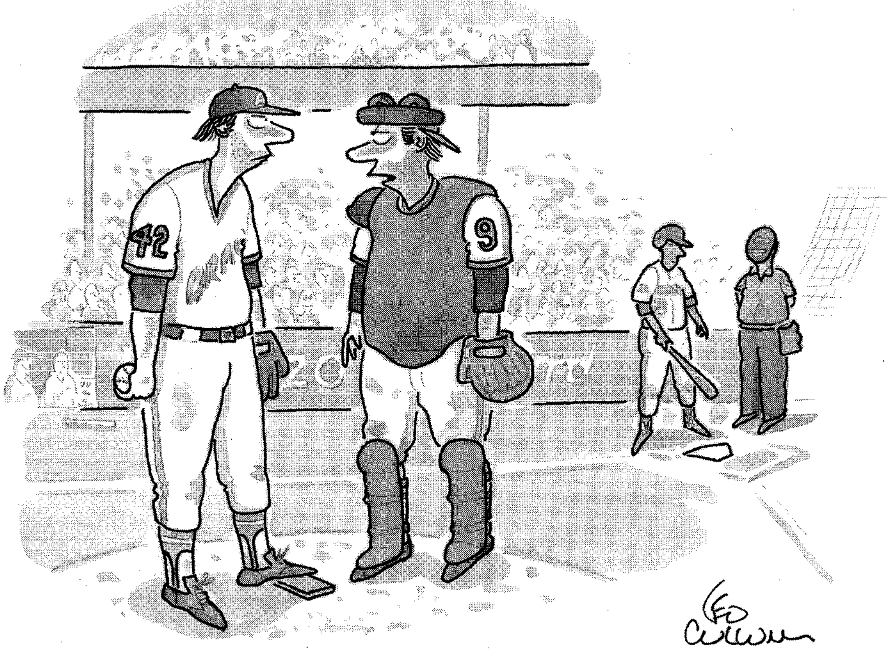
Vijay Seshadri (Poem, p. 72) has published two collections of poems, "Wild Kingdom" and "The Long Meadow," which is available in paperback.

Peter Schjeldahl (Books, p. 78) is the magazine's art critic.

Alex Ross (Musical Events, p. 86) is completing a book about the history of twentieth-century music. ♦



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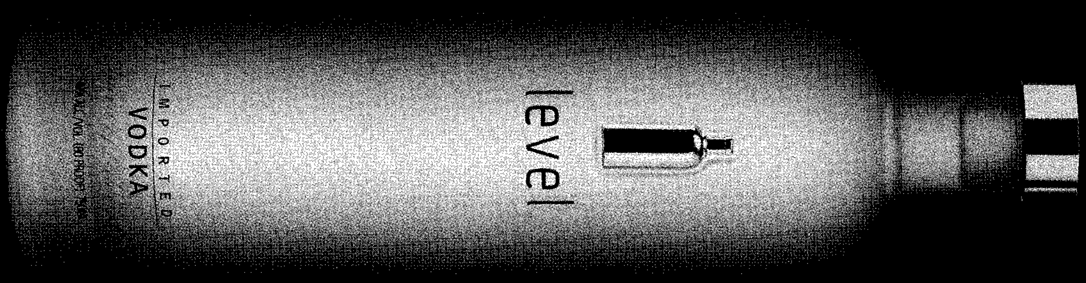

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

A MASTER CLASS WITH MYLA GOLDBERG

Fraud, Don't Get Too Comfortable
level

Photo Credit

Myla Goldberg's debut novel *Bee Season* propelled her to acclaim and recognition. Critical praise and word-of-mouth buzz made *Bee Season* a favorite of book clubs nationwide—a coveted position that it still holds today. This fall, Myla offers a new work titled *Wickett's Remedy*, an epic novel about an Irish American shopgirl facing down tragedy during the 1918 influenza epidemic. Fueled by her uncommon passion for research and a love of little-known maladies, Myla's artful storytelling has made her one of today's most watched young authors.

Level recently hosted an intimate master class with Myla in New York City. While guests sipped Level™ cocktails from the olive bar (blue-cheese-stuffed were the most popular), Myla explained how she uses the raw material of her curiosity to inspire her creative efforts. The discussion was moderated by David Rakoff (author of *Fraud* and the forthcoming *Don't Get Too Comfortable*). The two writers discussed the critical and commercial success of Myla's first novel, the challenges of starting all over again with a second novel, and the varied emotions of watching one's written words transformed on the big screen (*Bee Season* has been adapted for a film to be released this fall).

Myla offered many words of advice for aspiring writers. On writing workshops: "Don't take criticism of your work personally." On playing with form: "Experiment with structure all you want, but don't forget to tell a story." And on writing the second novel: "Always take your writing somewhere you haven't gone before." Clearly, Myla takes her own advice. With an imagination like hers, there are many new levels of success to come for this talented author.

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IN GUANTÁNAMO

Jane Mayer, in her article concerning prisoner treatment at Guantánamo Bay, suggests the difficulties involved in arriving at an accurate understanding of what has taken place there, and also mentions the uncertainty surrounding what role may have been played by psychologists attending interrogations ("The Experiment," July 11th & 18th). Recently, a task force of the American Psychological Association released a report on the ethics of psychologists' involvement in national-security-related investigations. The report concluded that psychologists may assist in interrogations as advisers or consultants but must do so within strict ethical guidelines. It also makes clear that psychologists must never engage in, direct, support, or facilitate torture or any treatment that is cruel, inhuman, or degrading. Further, they must not use information from a medical record to the detriment of an individual's safety and well-being, or mix treatment and consultant roles. Psychologists are obligated to report unethical behavior to the authorities, to make clear the bounds of what is confidential, and to correct any misimpressions about whether they are acting as health-care providers or as interrogators. Finally—and central to its ethical analysis—the report stated that psychologists are bound by the A.P.A. Ethics Code in all their professional activities, regardless of whether they identify themselves as "behavioral scientists" or otherwise.

Ronald F. Levant
President, American Psychological Association
Washington, D.C.

In the early seventies, while supervising economic aid to Vietnam for the Agency for International Development (A.I.D.), I had occasion to visit the infamous "tiger cage" prison cells in which the South Vietnamese held political prisoners and P.O.W.s. News reports of the prison's harsh conditions created widespread outrage that America could support a government responsible for such abuses. As a result, conditions were considerably improved. The A.I.D. had no role in the operation of the prison, but we were able to assist in improving conditions by providing supplies and other support. But it is striking that the conditions that provoked such outrage then were not as inhumane as those Mayer reports as occurring now in Guantánamo. It is becoming hard to avoid the conclusion that the U.S. has been engaging in systematic, widespread torture—a conclusion that seems almost beyond belief. The psychological methods described—which compromise a prisoner's sanity—should be considered torture just as much as physical abuse. That these practices are being abetted by psychiatrists and other physicians is despicable.

Robert H. Nooter
Washington, D.C.

I was a captain in the U.S. Air Force from 1952 to 1962, and I went through a training program in Nevada exactly like those Mayer describes. It was a combination of survival training in the mountains around Reno, which taught us to scrounge for food in the wild, and imprisonment in "foreign" camps, where we were confined to underground cells in order to learn to endure the treatment that we would probably receive if caught. We were taunted by "enemy" soldiers and sometimes assaulted for not doing what we were told. In one incident, when a major was interrogated he was beaten until he passed out. He never fully recovered and was taken to a hospital. Most of us fared reasonably well—I lost only twenty pounds in a matter of weeks from lack of sufficient food. But the immediate effect on morale of being beaten up by one's own comrades was indescribable.

William F. Niedernhofer, Jr.
Lakeland, Fla.

•

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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THIS WEEK

THE THEATRE
LONG VIGIL

Two years ago, Mia Farrow played a woman who spent five years on death row in "The Exonerated," at the Culture Project. Now she returns to the stage in James Lapine's new play, "Fran's Bed," as a matriarch who daydreams of her past while her family gathers around her hospital bed. (See page 13.)

NIGHT LIFE
DEE DEE SINGS

The jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater, who spent time with the Thad Jones–Mel Lewis big band in the seventies and who had a Broadway turn in "The Wiz," has lived in France off and on since the eighties. She visits New York City only occasionally, but she's here this week with a free show at Lincoln Center. (See page 14.)

ART
UNDERGROUND ART

"Along the Way: MTA Arts for Transit" is intended to break the New York commuter's habit of filtering out everyday sights—in particular, the murals, sculptures, and designs that transform our subway and train stations. At the UBS gallery through Sept. 9. (See page 17.)

DANCE
DOUBLEHEADER

Two of the sleekest, sexiest contemporary dance troupes around—Stephen Petronio Company and Complexions Contemporary Ballet—perform popular repertory pieces at the "Lincoln Center Out of Doors" festival. (See page 18.)

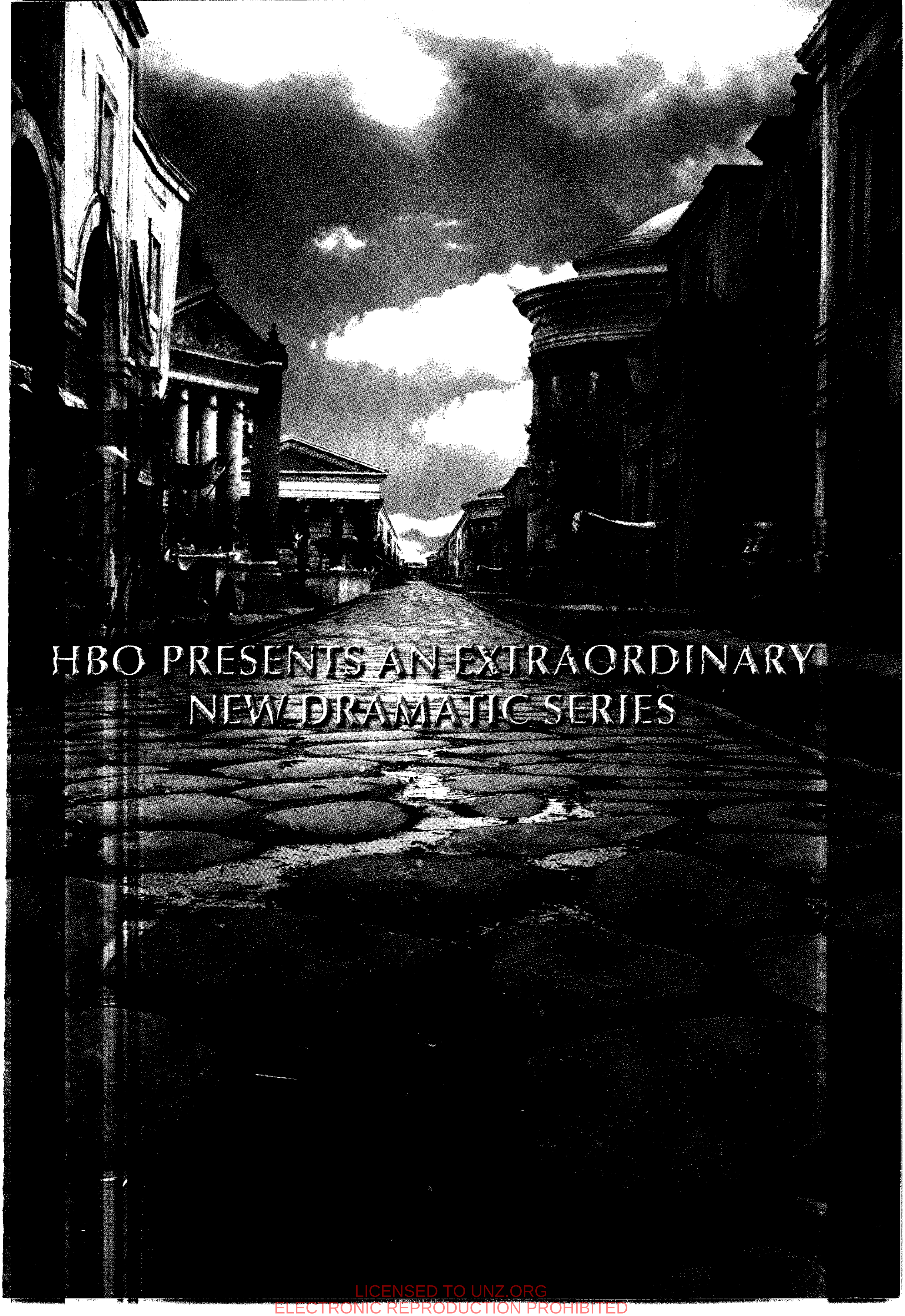
CLASSICAL MUSIC
NO MOZART

The Mostly Mozart Festival extends beyond its mandate to present the U.S. début of the Russian Patriarchate Choir, which will sing sacred music by Rachmaninoff, Bortnyansky, and anonymous Russian monks. (See page 18.)

READINGS AND TALKS
BEST MINDS

The East Village's "Howl!" festival comes to a close with a reading at Joe's Pub, featuring the longtime emperor of downtown cool, Lou Reed, along with the singer Keren Ann and others. (See page 25.)

A floating screening, part of the "Rooftop Films" series. Photograph by Sylvia Plachy.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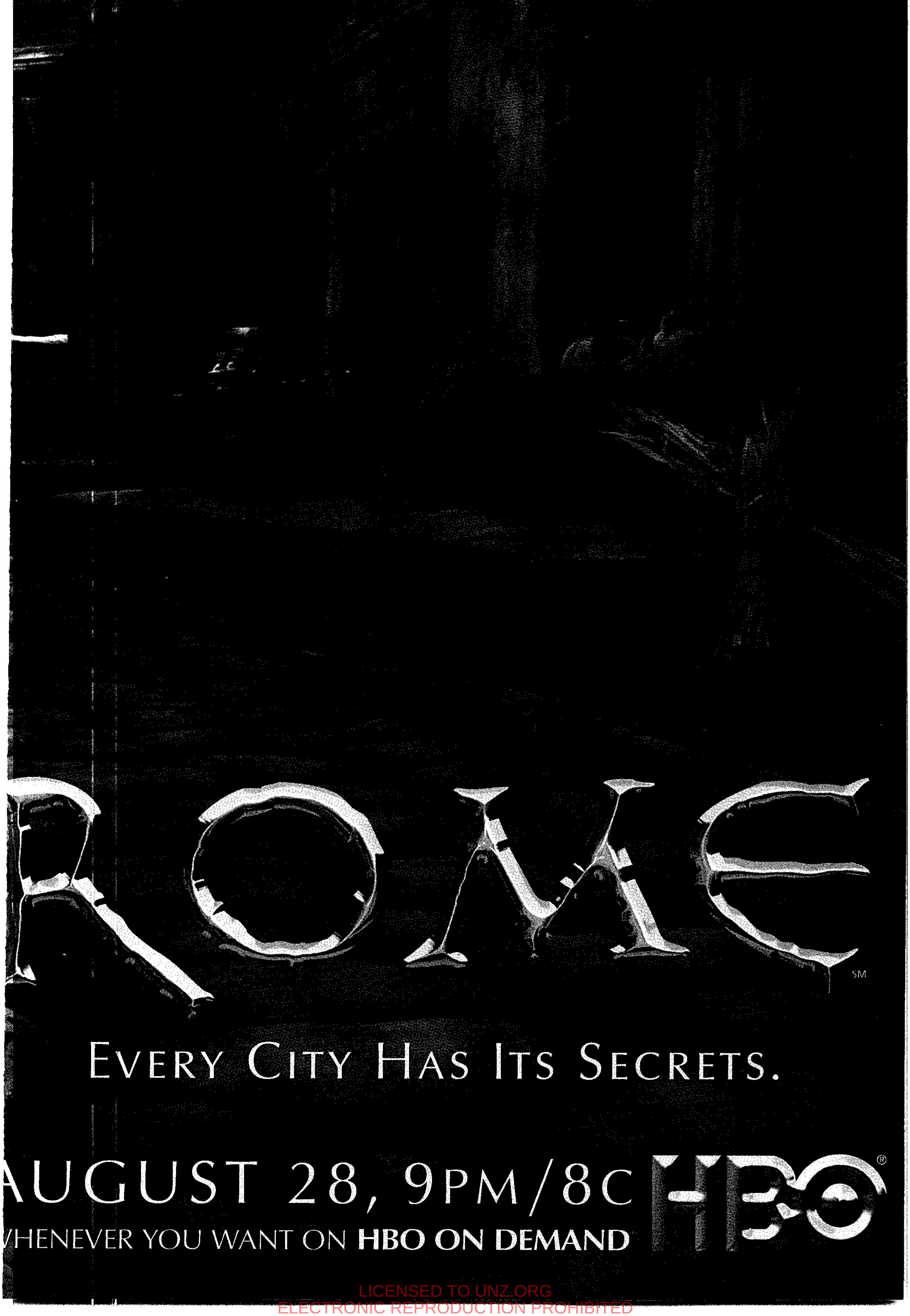
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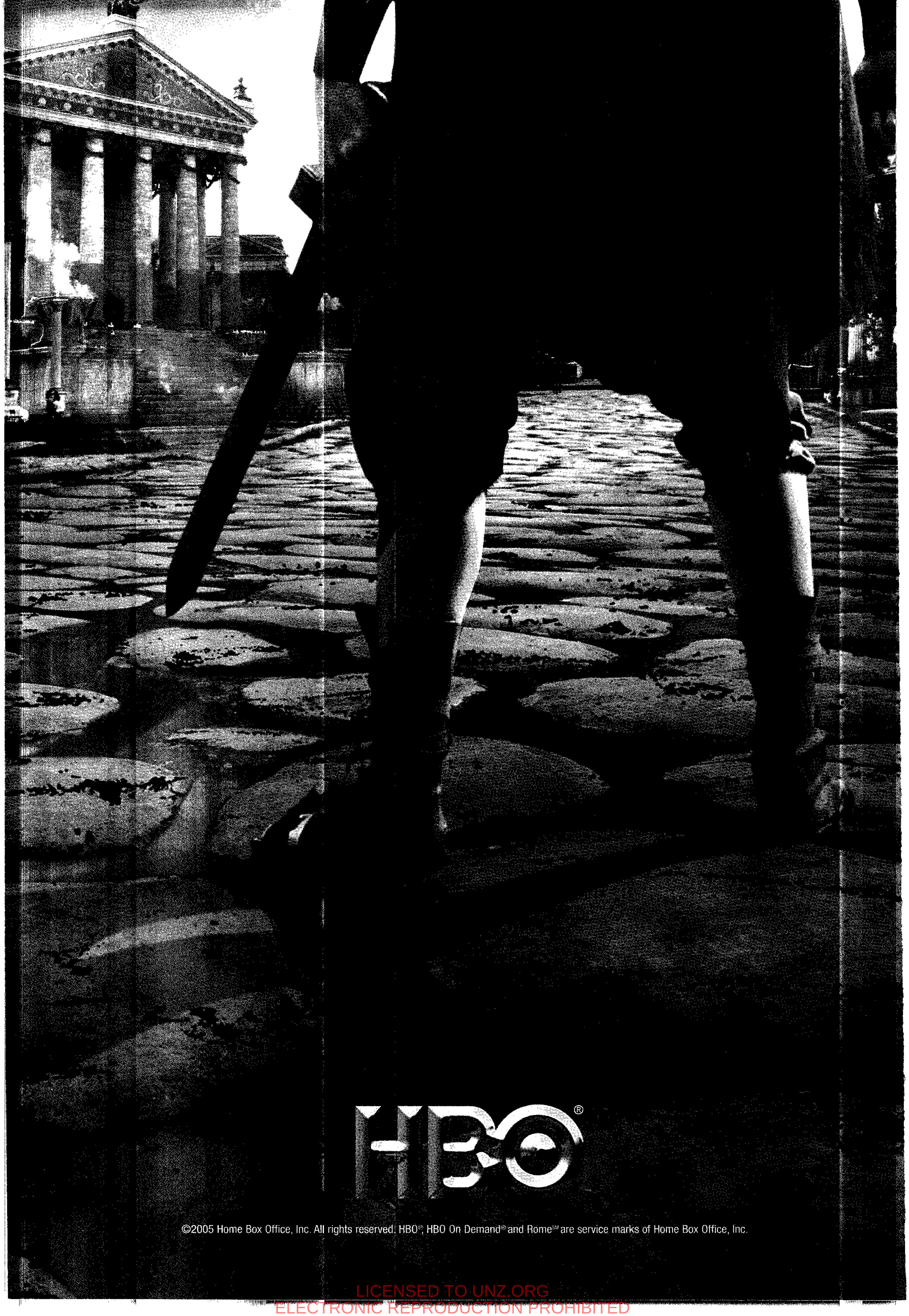

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THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

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BELLY OF A DRUNKEN PIANO
A one-man show by the Australian actor and musician Stewart D'Arrietta pays tribute to the life and music of Tom Waits by drawing on thirty years of songs. In previews. Opens Aug. 28 at 8. (SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 212-691-1555.)

DR. SEX
The love triangle between Dr. Alfred Kinsey, his wife, Clara, and their boyfriend, Wally, has become a musical comedy, with a score by Larry Bortniker and a book by Bortniker and Sally Deering. Directed by Pamela Hunt. Previews begin Aug. 26. (Peter Norton Space, 555 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

FRAN'S BED
Mia Farrow stars in Playwrights Horizons' thirty-fifth-anniversary season opener, a play written and directed by James Lapine ("Passion," "Sunday in the Park with George"), about a woman who revisits her memories as she lies in a sickbed, surrounded by her family. Previews begin Aug. 30. (416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAILER PARK MUSICAL
Set in a Florida trailer park called Armadillo Acres, this musical comedy has a book by Betsy Kelso (who directs), music and lyrics by David Nehls, and a set by Derek McLane ("I Am My Own Wife"). In previews. (Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.)

MIRACLE BROTHERS
The Vineyard Theatre presents a new musical by Kirsten Childs, set in seventeenth-century Brazil, about two brothers, one black, one white. With choreography, featuring capoeira, by Mark Dendy. Tina Landau directs. Previews begin Aug. 25. (108 E. 15th St. 212-353-0303.)

SIDES: THE FEAR IS REAL
This very funny show about the trials and terrors of Asian-American actors at theatre auditions comes to the Culture Project after a sold-out run last spring at P.S. 122. Presented by Mr. Miyagi's Theatre Company. One preview on Aug. 24. Opens Aug. 25 at 8. (45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.)

TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA
The Public Theatre's second Shakespeare in the Park production this summer is a revival of John Guare and Mel Shapiro's 1971 musical adaptation, with a score by Galt MacDermot ("Hair"). Kathleen Marshall directs. In previews. Opens Aug. 28 at 8. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-539-8750.)

WOMEN CENTER STAGE 2005
The Culture Project's celebration of women in the arts runs through Aug. 31 and includes staged readings and plays—including "The Speed Queen," a drama about a female inmate on death row, performed by Anne Stockton, who adapted it from a novel by Stewart O'Nan, and "Girl Blog from Iraq: Baghdad Burning," an ensemble piece about the American presence in Iraq—and panel discussions. This week's highlight: a staged reading on Aug. 30 by Lynn Redgrave of "Nightingale," her tribute to her maternal grandmother. For full festival schedule, visit www.womencenterstage.com. (45 Bleecker St. 212-352-3101.)

NOW PLAYING

THE DEAR BOY
In a new play by Dan O'Brien, Daniel Gerroll is James Flanagan, an imposing high-school English teacher who is more interested in his own pronouncements than in his students' minds—the sort of man who rails against modernist "word salad" while inwardly stewing over his half-lived life. A former student turned droll sexpot (Susan Pourfar, the production's one bright spot) rejuvenates him, but Flanagan fails to elicit much sympathy, whether early in the play, as he squashes young talent and doles out B-minuses, or later on, after his eventual mellowing. Directed by Michael John Garcés ("The Cook"). (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 212-246-4422. Through Aug. 27.)

DEDICATION OR THE STUFF OF DREAMS
Nathan Lane, Alison Fraser, and Marian Seldes star in a new play by Terrence McNally, about an idealistic couple who yearn to buy a theatre in upstate New York. A Primary Stages production. Michael Morris directs. (Reviewed in this issue.) (59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

JOY
An upbeat but uneven cast performs John Fisher's vapid comedy, which follows the romantic lives of a circle of gay and lesbian friends at a San Francisco university. Radical academics, closet cases, and cross-dressing surfer dudes alike are wrung through trite sitcom subplots, punctuated now and then with Gershwin and Cole Porter tunes. In several scenes, the actors "drink" from empty Martini glasses—a gesture that approximates the plight of the audience. Directed by Ben Rimalower. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 212-239-6200.)

LENNON
A musical portrait of the life and songs of John Lennon features multiple Lennons, portrayed by Will Chase and Terrence Mann, among others. Julie Danao-Salkin plays Yoko Ono. Written and directed by Don Scardino. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL FRINGE FESTIVAL
Broad parodies, political satires, biographical dramas, sexy skits, and homages to classic books and TV shows go head to head in the festival's ninth year. Nearly two hundred productions will be presented, by theatre and dance companies from twenty-two countries. For full festival schedule, visit www.fringenyc.org. (212-279-4488. Through Aug. 28.)

OEDIPUS AT PALM SPRINGS
The Five Lesbian Brothers—an all-female collective of performer-writers who banded together in 1989—put on four full-length plays before this one: impressionistic, performance-based productions that made sport of many aspects of contemporary life, from queer politics to the casual verbal violence of the workplace. In all four plays, the Brothers managed to avoid bathos. They never appeared desperate to be liked, and so they felt free—and made the audience feel free—to risk everything. It's disappointing, then, to find in the current production too little of the group's strongest suit: irreverence. The show is creditably directed by Leigh Silverman, and the actresses can be very funny as they address relationship issues with spoofy New Age therapy-speak, but with "Oedipus at Palm Springs," the Brothers, it seems, have gone straight. The result is more a television sketch than a play—it would work well as an hour-long film on Showtime. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/22/05.) (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200. Through Aug. 28.)

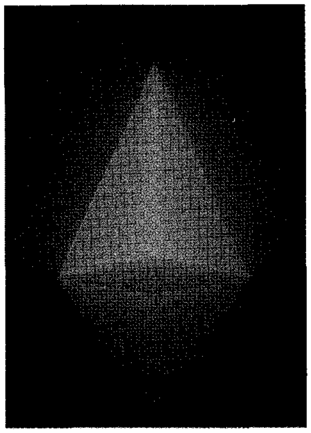
ONE-MAN STAR WARS TRILOGY
In this inspired act of madness, the Canadian actor Charles Ross recaps "Star Wars," "The Empire Strikes Back," and "The Return of the Jedi" in a single hour, portraying not only Luke Skywalker, Obi-Wan Kenobi, Darth Vader, Princess Leia, and Han Solo but R2-D2 (Ross's droid whistle-speech imitation is uncanny), AT-AT walkers, the trash-compactor snake, and even the floating words in the films' opening credits. Directed by TJ Dawe. (Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

PHILADELPHIA, HERE I COME!
At the Irish Repertory Theatre, an excellent cast revives Brian Friel's bittersweet 1964 play about Gar O'Donnell, a young Irishman who resolves to leave his home town of Ballybeg. As he ponders parting from the lads he knocked around with and the girl he loved, he splits into two characters: the clever, cynical Private Gar (James Kennedy) and his boyish alter ego, Public Gar (Michael FitzGerald). (132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737. Through Sept. 4.)

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
OUT OF SIGHT

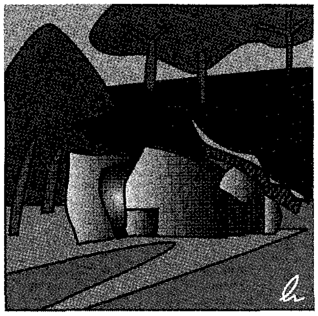
James Turrell, master of light fantastic, makes perceptual situations—holes in walls resembling walls, for example—and never objects. And holograms are the most reliably disappointing medium in art. Now a show of eleven smallish, framed, simple holograms by Turrell at Pace Wildenstein uptown alters these truths simultaneously. Each harbors the shimmering apparition of a rectangular plane or a transparent wedge shape, emerging from ambiguous depth into a few inches of real space. Hues run to shifting blends and intensities of blue and green or red and yellow. To absorb the pictures is to discover rewritten laws of physics, perhaps congruent with some eldritch nth dimension out of string theory. As always with Turrell, visual pleasure comes at a cost of alarmed distrust in the integrity of normal eyesight. Also in the show are two projected shapes of light—a turquoise wedge and a pink pyramid—in corners of darkened rooms. Both from 1968, they attest to the longevity of Turrell's aperçu that illusion is real.

—*Peter Schjeldahl*



"ALTA (PINK)" (1968)

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
OPERA UPSTATE



Bard College's Summerscape festival, housed in the Fisher arts center, Frank Gehry's Bilbao-in-the-woods, is only three years old, but it has quickly become one of the major upstate festivals, rivalling Glimmerglass and Tanglewood. The last couple of weeks have brought gripping productions of two unsung operas of the fifties: Marc Blitzstein's "Regina" and Aaron Copland's "The Tender Land." "Regina," a caustic, not entirely coherent adaptation of Lillian Hellman's "Little Foxes," soared on the strength of Lauren Flanigan's Bette Davis-style performance, and Leon Botstein and the American Symphony capably juggled operatic, music-theatre, and jazz elements. "The Tender Land," which tells of a farm girl's rebellion against her tight-knit family, has felt anemic in prior revivals, but here, with a gorgeous set by Antje Ellermann, expert direction by Erica Schmidt, strong conducting by James Bagwell, and piercing lead performances by Anne Jennifer Nash, Vale Rideout, and the radiant Jennifer Dudley, it felt like a major work on an intimate scale.

—*Alex Ross*

OUT OF TOWN

BAY STREET THEATRE
B. D. Wong leads the cast in a revival of "Pippin," the tongue-in-cheek 1972 musical that imagines the coming-of-age struggles of Charlemagne's son. Music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz and book by Roger O. Hirson. Jack Hofsiss ("The Elephant Man") directs. (Sag Harbor, N.Y. 631-725-9500. Through Sept. 4.)

HAMPTONS SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
The alfresco summer series in Montauk and Southampton celebrates its tenth anniversary with Jesse Berger's staging of "A Midsummer Night's Dream," set in an enchanted fairgrounds. This week's performances take place Aug. 24-28 at 8, at Agawam Park in Southampton. (For more information, call 631-267-0105, or visit www.hamptons-shakespeare.org.)

HUDSON VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
"Two Gentlemen of Verona" plays on the tented outdoor stage at the Boscobel Restoration. For more information, visit www.hvshakespeare.org. (Cold Spring, N.Y. 845-265-9575. Through Sept. 4.)

Also Playing

ALL SHOOK UP: Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 212-307-4100. **ALTAR BOYZ:** Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. **AVENUE Q:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **CHICAGO:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200. **CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG:** Hilton, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100. **DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **DOUBT:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. **DRUMSTRUCK:** Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF:** Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100. **FOOLS IN LOVE:** Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. **FATAL ATTRACTION: A GREEK TRAGEDY:** East 13th Street Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. 212-279-4200. (Through Aug. 27.) **FRESHLY SQUEEZED:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-307-4100. **GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS,** Bernard B. Jacobs, 242 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. (Closes Aug. 28.) **HAIRSPRAY:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100. **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA:** Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200. **MAMMA MIA!:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-563-5544. **MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **MOVIN' OUT:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100. **ORSON'S SHADOW:** Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-239-6200. **THE PILLOWMAN:** Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **SWEET CHARITY:** Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING):** DR2, 103 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200. **THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE:** Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 212-239-6200. **WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?:** Longacre, 220 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. (Closes Sept. 4.) **WICKED:** Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100.

NIGHT LIFE
POP AND ROCK

Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

APOLLO THEATRE
253 W. 125th St. (212-531-5300)—Aug. 25: **Joan Armatrading.** A fixture of the British folk scene since the seventies, this songstress has never achieved star status in the U.S. Nonetheless, her rich, husky vocals and soul-stirring melodies have influenced such artists as Tracy Chapman and Sarah McLachlan. With the Latin singer, guitarist, and composer **Raul Midón.**

B.B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Aug. 24: **Tower of Power** is celebrated for its ultra-tight horn section, which has appeared on albums by artists ranging from Santana to Victoria Williams. Despite a constantly shifting roster, the group has produced some memorable songs, including "So Very Hard to Go" and the always in-vogue "What Is Hip?" Aug. 26: A visit from New Orleans's **Neville Brothers.** Aug. 29: **Twiztid,** a marginally talented white rap duo from Detroit, aspires to unspeakable tastelessness at every turn (one of their favorite subjects is serial killing). Their mentors are the Insane Clown Posse (who seem groundbreaking by comparison), and they share with them a penchant for painting their faces and scaring grownups.

"BLUEGRASS BALL"
Laura Cantrell, a Nashville native and whip-smart singer who lives in New York City, headlines an afternoon of down-home music, with the **Reckon So,** the **Y'all Stars,** and the **Cobble Hillbillies.** A part of the "Howl!" festival. (Tompkins Square Park, St. Marks Pl. at Avenue A. For details, visit www.howlfestival.com. Aug. 28.)

"CHILDREN OF LOST CITY"
This party, which takes place under the auspices of the "Howl!" festival, promises a multimedia celebration of a time in New York's fabled past when rents were cheap, the cops left you alone, and the arts scene bloomed. Leading the nostalgic revue are **Kid Congo and the Pink Monkey Birds, Vic Thrill, Unclefucker,** and **Gaijin a Go-Go.** Scopitones, the sixties predecessor to music videos, will be screened, and the art installations include a psychedelic light collage by the Mighty Robot Audio/Visual Squad. (Clemente Soto Vélez Cultural Center, 107 Suffolk St. For details, visit www.howlfestival.com. Aug. 27.)

HAMMERSTEIN BALLROOM
Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171)—Aug. 30: The **Used** are angry youths from Utah who have profited by rebelling against their Mormon background. They splice the passionate delivery of emo rock with the catchy trappings of pop punk. They appear unhinged (their bio includes homelessness and drug addiction), and, of course, they are teen favorites.

ISSUE PROJECT ROOM
400 Carroll St., Brooklyn (718-330-0313)—Aug. 30: The soulful downtown pianist **Anthony Coleman** celebrates his fiftieth birthday in this new space, situated in a renovated silo alongside the Gowanus Canal. He'll be joined by a wide variety of friends and music from bands such as the North African- and Balkan-laced trio Sephardic Tinge and the minimalist klezmer of the Selfhaters Orchestra. Coleman will be joined by the members of those bands, an all-star cast of downtown instrumentalists including the percussionist **Roberto Rodriguez,** the bassist **Greg Cohen,** and the saxophonist **Roy Nathanson,** adding their touches to his highly personal take on everything from Bosnian blues to Eastern European disco music.

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Aug. 30: **American Analog Set,** a shifting ensemble with deep roots in Texas, plays shimmering little songs with minimalist flair. Also on Aug. 30: The expansive chamber pop of **Melomane.** With **Pistolera,** a newish band featuring the singer and guitarist Sandra Velasquez and her cousin Anni Cordero.

"LINCOLN CENTER OUT OF DOORS"
Aug. 26: **Angélique Kidjo** plays an eclectic fusion of jazz, R. & B., and the traditional music of her native Benin. On her most recent album, "Oyaya!," Kidjo artfully focusses on Latin styles—from Afro-salsa to meringue to calypso. Aug. 28: The American-born singer **Dee Dee Bridgewater** continues her affair with her adopted homeland, France, on her forthcoming album, "J'ai Deux Amours." It's full of the usual suspects ("La Vie en Rose," "La Mer," "Mon Homme"), but Bridgewater brings the same sass and creativity to these Gallic pieces that she did to Kurt Weill's tunes on her brilliant album "This Is New," from 2002. (Both shows are in Damrosch Park. For more information, call 212-875-5766, or visit www.lincolncenter.org.)

MERCURY LOUNGE
217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—Aug. 24: **Kinski** is a high-volume Seattle outfit that plays

LAURIE ROSENWALD

experimental guitar instrumentals in the vein of vintage Sonic Youth. The band is currently touring to promote its latest album, "Alpine Static." Aug. 25: The tropical pop sounds of **Mosquitos.**

NORTHSIX
66 N. 6th St., Williamsburg, Brooklyn (718-599-5103)—Aug. 27: **Of Montreal.** Led by Kevin Barnes, who formed the band in Athens, Georgia, nearly a decade ago, this group built its reputation trafficking in neo-psychedelia. In more recent years, however, Barnes has introduced an enticing pop element.

PIANOS
158 Ludlow St. (212-505-3733)—Aug. 28: An evening of toe-tapping honky-tonk. The **American String Conspiracy** marks its second anniversary on the local scene with an early show in the upstairs space. Expect old-time classics and a few originals. Later that evening, **Pale Blue Dot,** a family affair from Nashville, rolls in with its gritty garage folk. The band, which features an ex-New Yorker, Scott Collins, his brother, Justin, and Justin's wife, Kim, is known for high-energy shows.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—Aug. 24-27: **Tierney Sutton,** an engaging singer who revives familiar standards, has a new live album, "I'm with the Band."

CHARLIE PARKER JAZZ FESTIVAL
This annual gathering remains a balm for the approaching end of summer. The two-day event begins on Aug. 27 at Marcus Garvey Park (Fifth Ave. at 120th St.) with **Bobby Watson's** reunited Horizon band, as well as with as the British saxophone sensation **Soweto Kinch** and the **Odeon Pope Saxophone Choir.** The following day finds the pianist **Gerri Allen,** the drummer **Cindy Blackman's** quartet, the return of **Odeon Pope,** and others at Tompkins Square Park. (St. Marks Pl. at Avenue A. For more information, visit www.cityparksfoundation.org.)

DANNY'S
346 W. 46th St. (212-265-8133)—Starting Aug. 24: **Annie Ross,** the English actress and singer who's best known for her work with the jazz-vocal group Lambert, Hendricks, and Ross, is here on Wednesdays for the next five weeks. Blossom Dearie, who's usually here on Saturdays and Sundays, is on hiatus through Oct. 15; Ross will sit in for her on select Saturdays until her return.

DIZZY'S CLUB COCA-COLA
Broadway at 60th St. (212-258-9595)—Aug. 23-28: **Ray Barretto** and New World Sextet. Barretto is a *conguero* for all seasons; his neo-salsa bands invariably have the New York mix in just the right proportions—two pinches of Latin to one pinch of jazz and a dusting of funk.

IRIDIUM
1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Aug. 25-28: The multi-instrumentalist Eric Dolphy has been gone for more than forty years, and even though he has not received the acclaim lavished upon such co-visionaries—and occasional collaborators—as John Coltrane and Ornette Coleman, astute musicians know better. The pianist **Eric Reed** leads a tribute, backed by the saxophonist **Wes Anderson,** the bassist **Buster Williams,** the trumpeter **Jeremy Pelt,** and the drummer **Billy Hart.**

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Art Pepper referred to **George Cables** as "Mr. Beautiful," and when his trusted pianist coaxes nectar out of a ballad or negotiates a bebop run with supernal grace you understand why the late saxophone legend was so smitten. Cables, a West Coast fixture, visits Aug. 26-28 with a quartet.

SWEET RHYTHM
88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (212-255-3626)—**Steve Nelson** is a vibraphonist and marimba player with plenty to say, as his work with Dave Holland's bands proves. On Aug. 26-27 he has a to-die-for rhythm section: the pianist **Mulgrew Miller,** the bassist **Robert Hurst,** and the drummer **Lewis Nash.**

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Aug. 23-28: The **Greg Osby** quartet. The saxophonist's new album, "Channel Three," is a taut trio project, but here, Osby, one of the shining lights of his generation, beefs up his band with a piano. The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

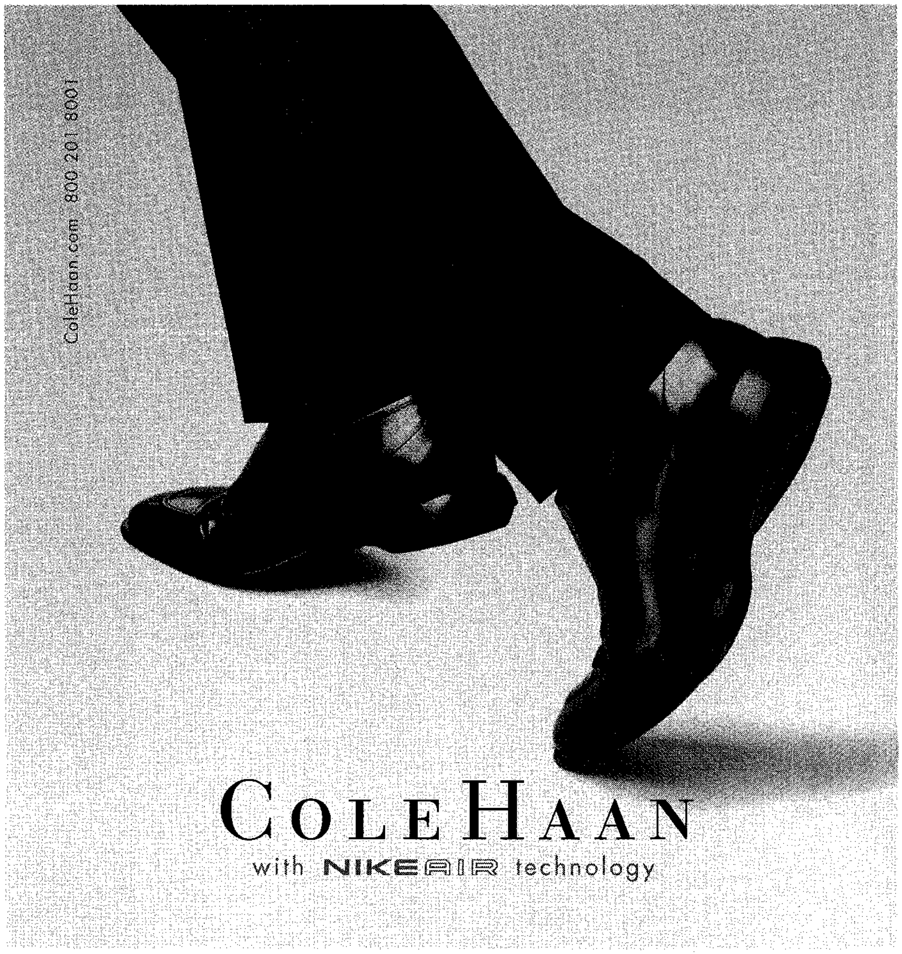
ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-535-7710)—**"Matisse: The Fabric of Dreams, His Art and His Textiles,"** a revelatory, achingly beautiful show, pairs items from the artist's personal fabric collection with paintings and graphic works in which they played crucial roles. Through Sept. 25. ♦ Two recent installations are on view in **"Tony Oursler at the Met: 'Studio' and 'Climaxed.'"** The first contemplates influences on the artist through an assemblage of pieces by the likes of Jacqueline Humphries, Rem Koolhaas, and Kaare Rafoss. The second, more traditional Oursler work is a giant, lumpy potato head with flames and a blinky face projected on it, its mouth voicing demented and hilarious threats, boasts, and sorrows. Through Sept. 18. ♦ **"John Townsend: Newport Cabinetmaker"** presents a few dozen pieces by a prominent Colonial American furniture-maker alongside work by his contemporaries. Through Sept. 25. ♦ **"Sol LeWitt on the Roof: Splotches, Whirls, and Twirls."** A summer installation in the roof garden, featuring five spiky stalagmite sculptures and a wall drawing. Through Oct. 30. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—**"Pioneering Modern Painting: Cézanne and Pissarro, 1865-1885"** chronicles the careers of two friends who gave each other a leg up into brave new styles and techniques, though it quickly becomes clear that Cézanne, the younger artist by a decade, vaulted much higher. Through Sept. 12. ♦ **"Friedlander,"** a major retrospective of the work of the photographer Lee Friedlander (born in 1934). Through Aug. 29. ♦ **"The High Line"** details Field Operations and Diller Scofidio & Renfro's ambitious urban rails-to-trails scheme for the abandoned elevated tracks that run along the West Side from Gansevoort Street to Thirty-fourth Street. Through Oct. 31. (Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"Robert Mapplethorpe and the Classical Tradition: Photographs and Mannerist Prints."** An exhibition that harmonizes Mapplethorpe's classically posed, erotically charged photographs with stylized sixteenth-century Flemish Mannerist prints. Through Aug. 28. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (212-570-3676)—**"Robert Smithson,"** a retrospective of drawings, constructions, and collages, includes filmed, photographed, and sketched documentation of the iconic "Spiral Jetty." Through Oct. 23. ♦ Work by eight artists, including Terry Winters, Ati Maier, and Matthew Ritchie, is on display in **"Remote Viewing: Invented Worlds in Recent Painting and Drawing."** Through Oct. 9. ♦ The eclectic gathering of works from the permanent collection in **"Landscape"** ranges from Jasper Johns's white maps to Ed Ruscha's rows of L.A. streets and Roni Horn's eerie comparison of the body and the earth, "Becoming a Landscape" (1999-2001). Through Sept. 18. ♦ **"Banks Vio-**



Andrew Moore's "Restoration Studio, Russia, 2000," in "On View: Photographing the Museum," at Richardson through Sept. 17.

lette: Untitled" contemplates the romantic sublime with a model of a ruined church cast in salt and music composed by the black-metal musician Snorre Ruch. Through Oct. 2. ♦ **"Prints Into Drawings,"** a roomful of prints that were made in the past fifty years, illustrates the shared techniques of drawing and printmaking. Through Aug. 28. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Central Park W. at 79th St. (212-769-5100)—**"Dinosaurs: Ancient Fossils, New Discoveries,"** a review of recent developments in the study of dinosaurs, provides insight into how the animals moved through their world. Through Jan. 8, 2006. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM OF ART
200 Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—**"Monet's London: Artists' Reflections on the Thames, 1859-1914"** includes Claude Monet's signature melting views of the Waterloo and Charing Cross Bridges, Whistler's "Thames Set" etchings (1859-1860), and works by Winslow Homer, Childe Hassam, and André Derain, among others. Through Sept. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (212-849-8300)—**"Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance"** is a thrilling show, quick to stoke imagination and amazement. Items on view include wing suits for skydivers, fast-deploying webs for riot control, and the Tumbleweed, a giant computerized beach ball that follows the wind on Mars, periodically deflating to collect data. Through Oct. 30. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 9; Saturdays, 10 to 6; and Sundays, noon to 6.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY
1133 Sixth Ave., at 43rd St. (212-857-0000)—**"The Open Book."** Long before there were photography galleries and museums, much less a booming photo market, books were the medium's primary delivery system, and they remain the context of choice for many photographers. This excellent survey of more than a hundred and thirty important and unusual photographic books made between 1878 and 2002 is weighted in favor of volumes that are art objects in themselves, like El Lissitzky's multipart "Industriia Sotsializma" or Nobuyoshi Araki's series of Photocopy Books. But the range is extraordinarily broad, from a 1911 issue of *Camera Work* featuring Alfred Stieglitz's own work to Steven Meisel's notorious Madonna collaboration, "Sex." In between: a photo maven's dream library. Through Sept. 4. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Saturdays and Sundays, 10 to 6, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

NEUE GALERIE
1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-628-6200)—**"War/Hell: Master Prints by Otto Dix and Max Beckmann."** Through Sept. 26. (Open Fridays, 11 to 9, and Saturdays through Mondays, 11 to 6.)

P.S. 1 CONTEMPORARY ART CENTER
22-25 Jackson Ave., at 46th Ave., Long Island City (718-784-2084)—**"Greater New York 2005"** features work by more than a hundred and sixty artists from around the city who have emerged in the past five years. Through Sept. 26. (Open Thursdays through Mondays, noon to 6.)

RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART
150 W. 17th St. (212-620-5000)—For hundreds of years after the death of Shakyamuni Buddha (ca. fifth century B.C.), he was not depicted in bodily form but symbolized as an immanent absence, often by the *buddhapada*, or sacred footprint. As Buddhism spread from India to China and the rest of Asia, the *buddhapada* travelled, too. **"Eternal Presence: Handprints and Footprints in Buddhist Art"** examines some fifty examples of paintings and sculpture, dating from the second century B.C. to the present and hailing from India, Pakistan, Burma, Thailand, Tibet, China, and Japan. From enormous marble slabs to delicately painted tankas to a tiny seal in lapis lazuli, the objects are as opulent as the footprints and handprints are simple. Through Sept. 4. (Open Tuesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 7; Wednesdays, 11 to 5; Thursdays and Fridays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

Summer-hours warning: many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.

LYONEL FEININGER
"Drawing is the soul of art," Feininger (1871-1956) once said, in a statement that played to his own strengths. The artist, who exhibited at the Salon des Indépendents in Paris and taught at the Bauhaus and Black Mountain College, started out as

an illustrator and caricaturist before committing to a career as a painter, in 1907. The best works here are the small, sure drawings of a "Country Road, Baltic" (1910), done in thick black crayon, and those documenting architecture in the backstreets of Paris. Others, like the ink-on-paper "Eilige Leute (People in a Hurry)" (1914), show his roots in the graphic arts, with cartoonish hulking silhouettes slouching across the page. Through Sept. 16. (Moeller, 167 E. 73rd St. 212-988-4500.)

"ALONG THE WAY: MTA ARTS FOR TRANSIT"
Riding the subway can provide, all by itself, the stimuli of great art—drama, pathos, color, shock. But for a specifically curated visual experience, there are the murals and sculptures of the MTA Arts for Transit program. "Along the Way" presents more than a hundred examples from the program's twenty-year history, mostly via photographic reproduction, but with original work mixed in. Spot old favorites—Nancy Spero's demon-diva, from the Lincoln Center station—or find reasons to go out of your way, like the Acconci Studio/Daniel Frankfurt design for the West Eighth Street aquarium stop, in Coney Island. Then there are all the works you never noticed, and, of course, the ones you love to hate. Through Sept. 9. (UBS, 1285 Sixth Ave. 212-713-2885.)

"MADE IN THE SHADE"
Because galleries frequently use their summer group exhibitions to showcase new additions to their stable or audition fresh talent, this is a great season for anyone interested in emerging artists. Here, for instance, among a superb group of photographs by Robert Frank, Harry Callahan, László Moholy-Nagy, Garry Winogrand, Philip-Lorca diCorcia, Emmet Gowin, and the always remarkable Judith Joy Ross, are three terrific color pictures by Jocelyn Lee. Although Lee has been showing solid work since the mid-nineties, her environmental portraits of young people have become emotionally richer and more confident, and they look right at home in this classy company. Through Aug. 24. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)

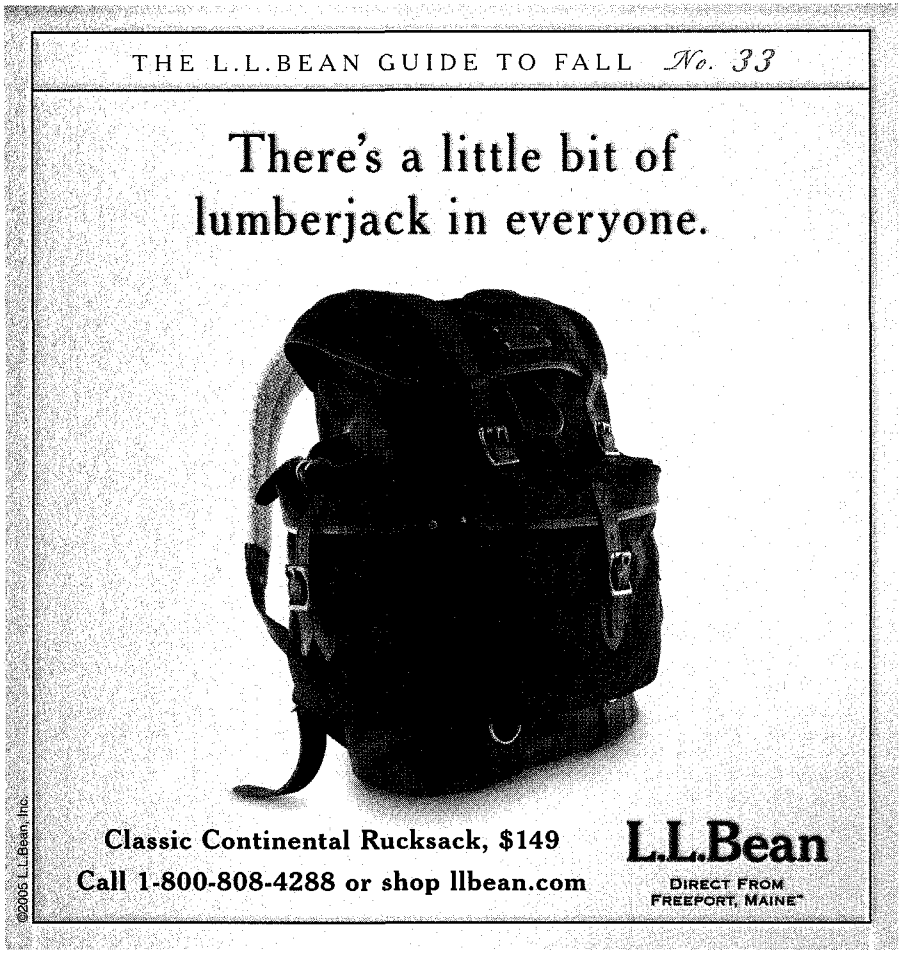
Short List

JANET CARDIFF: Starts at the kiosk on Central Park South at Sixth Avenue; a credit card or photo I.D. is required to take out the audio equipment. Thursdays through Sundays, 10 to 3:30. For more information or for reservations, call the Public Art Fund, at 212-980-3942. Through Sept. 11. **ERLE LORAN:** Smithsonian Archives of American Art Research Center, 1285 Sixth Ave. 212-399-5015. Through Oct. 7. **JAMES TURRELL:** Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St. 212-421-3292. Through Sept. 24. **PETER WEGNER:** Lever House, 390 Park Ave., at 53rd St. Through Sept. 4. **"REPEAT PERFORMANCE":** Anthony Grant, 37 W. 57th St. 212-755-0434. Through Sept. 17.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

JUSTIN LOWE
It's not the Summer of Love, but something like it as Lowe turns his reading-room project into a collaborative, communal affair. Lowe's contribution is a nook with pillows and a squishy platform made of dime-store paperbacks packed in tightly, edges up. Painted, printed, and drawn "wallpaper" squares by several dozen other artists (Jutta Koether, Benjamin Butler, and Rirkrit Tiravanija among them) reinterpret the interior of Neil Young's 1974 album "On the Beach." Peter Coffin's vase-like sculpture smokes when watered, intensifying the opium-den effect. Jen DeNike's "Shipwreck" video, with a panty-clad woman prostrate in ocean surf, is intermittently lulling and disturbing. New additions arrive nearly daily, making the installation a mutable, freewheeling social experiment. Through Sept. 24. (Printed Matter, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-925-0325.)

"MASTERS OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE"
The Masters of the Universe show title conjures a seminar devoted to grand gestures and sculp-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tural epics, but the reality is much quieter—and a bit of a letdown. Bruce Naumann's "Office Edit I" feels like an orphaned fragment from his great multichannel video "Mapping the Studio (Fat Chance John Cage)," mounted in Dia's annex three years ago. Wolfgang Laib's lacquered red stairs aren't nearly as transporting as his piles of pollen and pools of milk, but Not Vital's fifty glass snowballs are pleasing. Tom Sachs's painstaking re-creation of an airplane bathroom is a marvel of obsessive craftsmanship. Unfortunately, it also provokes the question of why, exactly, it matters as sculpture. Through Aug. 30. (Sperone Westwater, 415 W. 13th St. 212-999-7337.)

"ON VIEW: PHOTOGRAPHING THE MUSEUM"
Many of the photos in this clever show address issues of illusion and reality, often from an iconoclastic, backstage perspective. Tim Davis sets the tone with a photograph of a painting that's so badly obscured by glare it looks like a curator's nightmare. Similarly, Richard Misrach, Thomas Struth, Abelardo Morell, and Doug Hall focus on the crucial effect context has on our perception of art. But some of the exhibition's most intriguing images were made in other sorts of museums, among wax effigies or taxidermic specimens, and one of the best, by Lisa Kereszi, shows a worker on his knees in a natural-history diorama that is at least as believable as he is. Through Sept. 17. (Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-9610.)

DANCE

"LINCOLN CENTER OUT OF DOORS"
The festival's free plein-air dance concerts continue in the Josie Robertson Plaza with **"Folk Feet,"** a smorgasbord of African, Panamanian, Bangladeshi, and Swedish companies, all based in Brooklyn (Aug. 24 at 5:30). On Thursday, a double bill in the Damrosch Park Band Shell features **Complexions Contemporary Ballet**, led by the former Ailey dancers Desmond Richardson and Dwight Rhoden, and **Stephen Petronio Company** (Aug. 25 at 7:30). Petronio leads off with two contrasting sections of the 2000 hit "Strange Attractors." Later, the sculpted dancers of Complexions perform excerpts from the tango ballet "The Cyclical Hour," set to music by Piazzolla, and from "Pretty Gritty Suite," a tribute to Nina Simone, and Richardson performs a solo to music by Stevie Wonder. On Saturday, Aug. 27, at 8, **Limón Dance Company** presents a program combining older classics (Limón's "The Moor's Pavane") with newer ones (Lar Lubovitch's invigorating "Concerto Six Twenty-Two" and Jirí Kylián's "Evening Songs," set to the song cycle by Dvořák. And an impassioned solo (Donald McKayle's "Angelitos Negros") is danced by Roxane D'Orléans Juste. On Monday, Aug. 29, at 8, the acrobats of Taiwan's **Hung-Sheng Lion Dance Theatre** present their update of the thousand-year-old Chinese lion-dance spectacle, complete with gongs, drums, ornate costumes (including a glow-in-the-dark multi-bodied dragon), and martial-arts-trained performers. (For more information, call 212-875-5766, or visit www.lincolncenter.org for full festival schedule. No tickets necessary.)

YOSHIKO CHUMA & THE SCHOOL OF HARD KNOCKS
The Japanese-born choreographer's work "Inside/Outside" has its New York première as part of the "Howl!" festival on the Lower East Side. Chuma places four seven-foot cubic frames and four white screens on a bare stage, then dapples the set with flickering black-and-white video projections inspired by the Japanese expressionist silent film from 1927, "A Page of Madness." A soundscape by Jacob Burckhardt knits the action together as performers move among the cubes, acting out a companion narrative to the projections. The cast includes four trombonists, who play an original piece by Christopher McIntyre, and the eerie Russian-born chanteuse Ksenia Vidyaykina, who sings several solos. Each night's performance is preceded by a pair of short works by emerging New York-based choreographers. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 212-477-5288. Aug. 25-27 at 8 and Aug. 28 at 5.)

TABLES FOR TWO
MERCADITO

179 Avenue B, between 11th and 12th Sts. (212-529-6490)—"Three's the perfect number," a waitress at this East Village spot told a trio of diners recently. "That way you each get a taste." She meant the diners, but she also meant the tacos, which come in daintily sized flights of three and are the prime attraction of the nearly year-old restaurant. The shareable portions and the long list of margaritas are also conducive to larger festive gatherings, a point seemingly not lost on organizers of bachelorette parties. One sweaty summer evening, the front room was packed with women in tank tops and men with shirtsleeves rolled up and shot glasses of tequila at hand. If you can make it through the crowd and negotiate the narrow hallway by the kitchen, the back dining area provides a cooler, slightly less raucous refuge. There are adobe walls, a thatched roof, and windows that look out onto a lushly overgrown backyard.

Ordering is preceded by a lengthy disquisition from the waiter or waitress. It's delivered pleasantly, but given the ubiquity of tapas-style dining it seems unnecessary; the idea could be distilled into "Get a little of everything." The chef and co-owner, Patricio Sandoval, has set out to reproduce the flavors of a Mexican marketplace (the restaurant's name means "little market"). The guacamoles—traditional, mango, and pineapple—are piquant and addictive; seviches, light and fresh, are served with excellent house-made saltines. Wild-bass seviche, made with strawberries, has a vivid sweetness that is complemented nicely by the spicy tuna, marinated in a chile-chipotle broth. The tacos range from the uninspired (the chicken mole is overwhelmed by a thick, almost cloying sauce) to the superb (the tuna is rich and smoky, while the shrimp taco, served with avocado and a garlic-chipotle mojo, is appealingly simple).

Sandoval recently opened a new outpost, Mercadito Grove, at Grove Street and Seventh Avenue, offering the same menu and the same margaritas. It's a tiny wedge of a spot, with a few cramped tables inside and a more expansive sidewalk café outside. The tacos and seviches are in as fine a form here as at the original, but some of the atmosphere dissipates in the subway rumble and traffic heat of the busy avenue. (Open Mondays through Thursdays for dinner, Fridays for lunch and dinner, and weekends for brunch and dinner. Entrées $7.50-$22.50.)

—*Andrea Thompson*

OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW
Two striking foreign companies close out this summer's festival of dance in the Berkshires. In the Ted Shawn Theatre, Black Grace, from New Zealand, brings back some of the vigorous all-male, Samoan-inspired ensemble pieces that made its U.S. début at last year's Pillow the surprise hit of the season. Among the offerings are the U.S. premières of "Open Letter," set to Terry Riley's "Requiem for Adam," and "Traditional Challenge/Hand Game," which features slap dancing. Throughout, the choreographer Neil Ieremia fully transforms traditional materials into sophisticated contemporary dance. (Aug. 24-26 at 8, Aug. 27 at 2 and 8, and Aug. 28 at 2.) In the Doris Duke Studio Theatre, Project Fukurow, from Japan, presents "Ozma," a sinister and surreal ceremony that combines robotlike puppets and impassive club moves. At one point, two women wrap gauze around a man's face, then draw it across the stage like a clothesline. (Aug. 25-26 at 8:15, Aug. 27 at 2:15 and 8:15, and Aug. 28 at 5.) (Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
CONCERTS IN TOWN

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL
"Traveling with Mozart" is the (very loose) theme of this year's series, which is offering its final concerts of the season. Home base is the reconfigured Avery Fisher Hall, which now offers seats behind the stage, a more intimate orchestral experience, and a richer and more appealing sound. Aug. 23-24 at 8: Gil Shaham, an artist of reliable accuracy and glamour, joins the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra in Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 4. Thomas Dausgaard, the conductor, also leads performances of Mendelssohn's "Hebrides" Overture and Beethoven's "Pastoral" Symphony. ♦ Aug. 24 at 10:30: Shaham and his sister, the pianist Orli Shaham, repair to the Kaplan Penthouse for an intimate concert of Mozart Violin Sonatas. ♦ Aug. 25 at 8: Mozart's trip to Russia never got beyond the dreaming stage, but that hasn't stopped the festival's programmer, Jane Moss, from bringing the venerable all-male Russian Patriarchate Choir to Alice Tully Hall for their U.S. début. Their sacred program includes works by Rachmaninoff and Grechaninov and a variety of ancient liturgical chants. ♦ Aug. 26 at 8: The Russians join the Concert Chorale of New York, the festival orchestra, and a quartet of soloists (including the soprano Sandrine Piau and the tenor Gregory Turay) for Mozart's Mass in C Minor, conducted by the festival's music director, Louis Langrée, at Avery Fisher Hall. As a prelude, the Patriarchate Choir sings a Te Deum by Bortnyansky. ♦ Aug. 27 at 8: The festival finale is a repeat of the Aug. 26 program, with the Russian music replaced by Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 20 in D Minor (with Jonathan Biss). (212-721-6500. For full schedule, see www.lincolncenter.org.)

BARGEMUSIC
Jeffrey Swann, a pianist and lecturer, is a favorite at the floating chamber-music series; he settles in for a weekend of Liszt. Aug. 25-26 at 7:30: In "The Man of Culture," Swann gives us an idea of the composer-pianist's range, performing "Années de Pèlerinage No. 2: Italie," the Fantasy and Fugue on "B.A.C.H.," and transcriptions of works by Schubert, Wagner, and Berlioz (the first movement of the "Symphonie Fantastique"). ♦ Aug. 27 at 7:30 and Aug. 28 at 4: "Virtuoso of the World or Patriotic Visionary?," a program emphasizing Liszt's re-creations of beloved places, includes such works as "Venezia e Napoli," four of the "Transcendental Études," and the Hungarian Rhapsodies Nos. 11, 12, 16, and 19. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

NEW YORK CITY OPERA: "AFTERNOON ARIAS"
The company, dusting off its populist image in advance of its fall season, presents Georgia Jarman, Eric Fennell, and other young singers in excerpts from three of its upcoming productions: "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," "Madama Butterfly," and "La Bohème." The conductor Gerald Steichen accompanies them. (Bryant Park, Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. Aug. 26 at 12:30. No tickets required.)

ACCORDION MASTER CLASS AND CONCERT SERIES
The irrepressible William Schimmel, the country's preëminent player and the composer of such works as "Civil War Tangos" and "Why I Didn't Marry Maria Braun," offers his annual jamboree of workshops and master classes to the city's accordion enthusiasts. Civilians are welcome to attend the three concerts, which will include pieces by such composers as David Diamond, Elliott Carter, Will Holshouser, Franz von Suppé, and Schimmel himself. (Tenri Cultural Institute, 43A W. 13th St. 212-876-0827. Aug. 26-28 at 7.)

OUT OF TOWN

BERKSHIRE OPERA
Sari Gruber, the first-prize winner of this year's Naumburg International Vocal Competition, leads the cast of Donizetti's **"L'Elisir d'Amore,"** the company's final production of the season. Kathleen Kelly conducts. (Koussevitzky Arts Center, Berkshire Community College, Pittsfield, Mass. 413-442-0099. Aug. 25 and Aug. 27 at 8 and Aug. 29 at 2.)

TANGLEWOOD
Boston's musical duchy offers its final concerts of the season. Aug. 26 at 6: In an early-evening "prelude concert," John Oliver conducts his excellent Tanglewood Festival Chorus in an adventurous program of Italian music from across the ages, with works by Lotti, Pizzetti, and Dallapiccola on the bill. ♦ Aug. 26 at 8:30: Marek Janowski conducts the Boston Symphony Orchestra in music by Mozart, Haydn (the Cello Concerto No. 2 in D Major, with Lynn Harrell), and Beethoven (the Second Symphony). ♦ Aug. 28 at 2:30: Janowski returns to lead the B.S.O. and the Chorus in an annual tradition—a closing-day concert of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Hillevi Martinpelto, Susan Platts, Kurt Streit, and Alastair Miles are the vocal soloists. (Lenox, Mass. 888-266-1200.)

SOUTH MOUNTAIN CONCERTS
As most of the Northeast's chamber-music festivals wind down, this longtime outfit begins. The season is short but high-class, and is largely sold out on subscription; the first event is a solo-piano recital with Peter Serkin, who will perform music by Schoenberg, Bach, and Beethoven. (Route 7, Pittsfield, Mass. Aug. 27 at 3. Remaining tickets at the door. For more information, see www.southmountainconcerts.org.)

MAVERICK CONCERTS
Aug. 27 at 8: Jay Ungar and Molly Mason, the fiddle-and-guitar duo famous for their music for Ken Burns's documentary "The Civil War," offer a concert of folk music. ♦ Aug. 28 at 3: Trio Solisti, a dynamic piano trio that brings an equal energy to music new and old, offers works by Brahms (the Trio No. 3 in C Minor), Ravel, and Paul Moravec, the winner of the 2004 Pulitzer Prize for Music. (Woodstock, N.Y. For more information, call 845-679-8217.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
The Bard Festival String Quartet makes a trip to northern Connecticut's string-quartet shrine to offer an all-Beethoven program (including the second "Razumovsky" Quartet and the Quartet in E-Flat Major, Op. 127). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. Aug. 28 at 3.)

BARD SUMMERSCAPE
This year's festival, a celebration of mid-twentieth-century American music, drama, dance, and film, concludes with a concert performance of **"The Golden Apple,"** a musical by the composer Jerome Moross and the librettist John Latouche. Jonathan Tunick conducts the American Symphony Orchestra; John Cullum and Howard McGillin lead the cast. (Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 845-758-7900. Aug. 28 at 8.)

MOVIES OPENING

THE BAXTER
Reviewed below in Now Playing. Opening Aug. 26. (In wide release.)

THE BROTHERS GRIMM
Terry Gilliam directed this comedic fantasy, in which the fairy-tale collectors, con men who claim to protect villagers from demons, encounter a real curse. With Matt Damon, Heath Ledger, and Monica Bellucci. Opening Aug. 26. (In wide release.)

THE CAVE
An action thriller set in Romania, in which a team of professional spelunkers discovers a new species. Directed by Bruce Hunt. Opening Aug. 26. (In wide release.)

FORMULA 17
A Taiwanese comedy about a gay teen-ager who moves to Taipei and falls in love with a playboy. In Cantonese. Opening Aug. 26. (Quad Cinema.)

THE MEMORY OF A KILLER
Erik Van Looy directed this noir thriller, about a Belgian hit man with Alzheimer's who has one last job. In Flemish and French. Opening Aug. 26. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.)

UNDISCOVERED
Meiert Avis directed this romantic comedy, about aspiring actors and musicians in L.A. With Pell James, Steven Strait, and Ashlee Simpson. Opening Aug. 26. (In wide release.)

WALL
Simone Bitton's documentary, about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, focusses on the fence being built to separate Jews and Arabs. In Arabic and Hebrew. Opening Aug. 26. (Quad Cinema.)

NOW PLAYING

THE ARISTOCRATS
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

ASYLUM
A disappointment, at once silly and chilly, from David Mackenzie, who made "Young Adam" with Ewan McGregor. The wildness that flared around that movie has abated with ominous speed. Natasha Richardson, who also executive produced the new picture, stars as Stella Raphael, who, with her young son, accompanies her husband, Max (Hugh Bonneville), to his new position at an asylum. There they find, in ascending order of strangeness, Dr. Cleave (Ian McKellen) and his brooding patient Edgar (Marton Csokas), whose career includes stints first as a sculptor and then as a homicidal maniac. His sexual adhesion to Stella is perhaps the least surprising development in any movie this year; the whole film, indeed, rejoices in the predictable, right down to the ruined tower where the lovers meet. McKellen enjoys the nonsense for what it is, whereas Richardson treats it with a vitreous solemnity. The result, with its constrained, Britain-bashing archness, could have been made a third of a century ago.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 8/22/05.) (In wide release.)

THE BAXTER
In this genial but neutered independent comedy by the young writer-director Michael Showalter, who also stars, the title refers to the loser in love. Showalter plays Elliot Sherman, a repressed Brooklyn C.P.A., who meets two women—a high-powered socialite (Elizabeth Banks) and a quirky rural misfit (Michelle Williams)—and spends the rest of the film stumbling into the right choice. Showalter, a member of the former comedy troupe the State, writes funny and smartly constructed scenes, but as a director he offers, for better and for worse, a comic actors' showcase. He himself is unsure whether to be Jack Lemmon or John Cleese, but the sublime Michelle Williams holds the screen

CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
ALL ABOUT EVE

From 1960 to 1968, Jeanne Moreau starred in, among other films: "La Notte" for Michelangelo Antonioni, "Jules and Jim" and "The Bride Wore Black" for François Truffaut, "Bay of Angels" for Jacques Demy, "Le Feu Follet" for Louis Malle, "Diary of a Chambermaid" for Luis Buñuel, and, for Orson Welles, "The Trial," "Chimes at Midnight," and "The Immortal Story." It was a hell of a run, yet her most extreme appearance, the one that alienated even Moreau-watchers with its portrait of a ruinous, trampy goddess, was the title role in Joseph Losey's "Eve," made in 1962. Stanley Baker plays a Welsh writer beset by fury and fame, and she is writer's block made flesh: a hard case of easy virtue, who sashays into battle against him. Their sexual fracas, touched with jet-set chic and recorded in flaring black-and-white, ricochets from Venice to Rome and back. The movie is difficult to track down, so the screenings of an extended cut at the Thalia on Aug. 27 and Aug. 30 are all the more gratifying. Just don't expect to come away unscathed.

—*Anthony Lane*

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

magnetically with her dewy-eyed channelling of the young Shirley MacLaine. The film is knowingly modelled on such Hollywood romances as "The Apartment," and Showalter also borrows their constraints: there's no sex, politics, worldly context, or ethnic diversity. In the classic comedies, sparks flew although the friction stayed offscreen. Here there's no friction at all.—*Richard Brody* (In wide release.)

BROKEN FLOWERS

Jim Jarmusch linking up with Bill Murray is a case of Mr. Cool meeting Mr. Cool, and the resulting silences are deafening. Murray plays Don Johnston, who is allegedly an aging Don Juan. But Murray is so quiet and self-contained that he seems to want nothing. When he sets out on the road to visit the women he was dating twenty years ago, one of whom may have conceived a son with him, the movie turns into a kind of elegant alienated travelogue. Some of the actresses Murray encounters do extremely well in their brief appearances, especially Sharon Stone, as a hard-luck blonde who doesn't demand too much from life, and Jessica Lange, as an iron-willed fraud who "talks to animals." Jarmusch is good at the evanescent emotions of lost love and unfulfilled lives, but the movie is all gesture and unspoken longing. It's all of a piece, and well observed, but it's an art object without the energy or courage to be a work of art.—*David Denby* (8/8 & 15/05) (In wide release.)

Terry Gilliam's "The Brothers Grimm" opens Aug. 26.

ZOHAR LAZAR

FANTASIA

Disney enlisted an odd assortment of collaborators (among them Stokowski, who did it voluntarily, and Stravinsky, who was brought in involuntarily), and this grab bag of ambitious animated shorts—an attempt to combine high art and mass culture—was publicized as if it were an artistic landmark. Disney's animators provided visual interpretations of Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D Minor (in Stokowski's transcription, which is a precursor of the musical processing in "2001") and of hyped-up excerpts from the "Nutcracker" Suite, "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," "The Rite of Spring," the "Pastoral" Symphony, "The Dance of the Hours," and "A Night on Bald Mountain" (which somehow leads into the "Ave Maria"). Volcanoes erupt and dinosaurs battle during "The Rite of Spring"; garlanded girl centaurs cavort during Beethoven's "Pastoral." Initially, the film was a box-office failure, but it proved successful in revivals, especially in the early seventies, when it became a popular head film, because of such ingredients as the abstract first section, the mushroom dance during the "Nutcracker" (one of the liveliest sequences), and the overly bright—somewhat psychedelic—color. "The Sorcerer's Apprentice," featuring Mickey Mouse, and parts of other sequences are first-rate Disney, but the total effect is grotesquely kitschy. Released in 1940.—*Pauline Kael* (Walter Reade Theatre; Aug. 28.)

THE 40-YEAR-OLD VIRGIN

In the beginning of Judd Apatow's sweet-as-candy comedy, Andy (Steve Carell) is not just a virgin. He's a complete nerd, a boy in a man's body who lives alone, has hundreds of mint-condition action figures, and rides his bicycle to his job at an electronics store. When the (relatively) cool guys at the store need another player for their poker game, Andy joins them, and ends up boasting awkwardly—and hilariously—about all the women he's been with, unwittingly revealing his humiliating secret. As the guys theorize about how Andy should go about getting deflowered, Andy falls for Trish (the excellent Catherine Keener), and avoids having sex with her. The story is simple, and, in spite of all the crudity, soft. The riskiness is in the sophisticated performances. Carell is empathetic and profoundly funny, and several members of the supporting ensemble stand out—especially Romany Malco as Jay, the philosopher-ladies' man, and Jane Lynch as Andy's boss, who makes it known, with a serenade, that she is willing to be of service.—*Shauna Lyon* (In wide release.)

FOUR BROTHERS

John Singleton directed this ensemble piece about four brothers out to avenge the death of their foster mother. It's an entertaining exercise in style: specifically, an urban Western, in which the spirit of Wyatt Earp hovers nearby as the men go about finding the killers. The movie is utterly preposterous—the script is cobbled together from "Oprah" moments and tough gangsta dramas—but there's plenty of gritty interplay between the brothers (played by Mark Wahlberg, Tyrese Gibson, Garrett Hedlund, and Outkast's Andre Benjamin) that's believable. Singleton moves the film along swiftly and unapologetically, creating a chaotic and graphic revenge drama that's almost purely visceral.—*Bruce Diones* (In wide release.)

GRIZZLY MAN

The indefatigable Werner Herzog has made a brilliant documentary about an American saint and fool—Timothy Treadwell, a failed actor and California surfer who fell in love with the grizzly bears in Alaska and who spent a dozen summers with the bears, usually alone and always unarmed. All was well until October, 2003, when Treadwell and his girlfriend, Amie Huguenard, were attacked and devoured by a hungry long-nosed grizzly. When the hundred hours of video footage that Treadwell shot in the last five years of his excursions fell into Herzog's hands, the German filmmaker interviewed Treadwell's friends and ex-girlfriends, naturalists, and park-service officers and wove the footage into a startling meditation on nature and innocence. Herzog is properly respectful of Treadwell, but he interprets the American as an impatient misfit who relieved his misanthropy with neurotic protestations of love in the wilderness. Treadwell doesn't seem to understand that death is at the center of any ecological balance, but Herzog, it turns out, sees nothing but death in nature. Neither man, it seems, is willing to admit that a bear is a bear is a bear.—*D.D.* (8/8 & 15/05) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

JUNEBUG

Meet the in-laws, North Carolina style. Phil Morrison's remarkably assured directorial début, about a cosmopolitan art dealer (Embeth Davidtz) who travels with her new husband (Alessandro Nivola) to his family home, is snarkily funny and unexpectedly moving. Set over a long weekend, the story (by Angus MacLachlan) focusses on the interaction between Davidtz's somewhat floundering character and the members of her husband's complex family. There's an unhurried attention to detail that Morrison brings to the story which allows the crisp dialogue and deep characterizations room to breathe. The various narrative strands—the domineering mother (Celia Weston) who favors one son over another, the chatterbox sister-in-law (a luminous Amy Adams) who hungers for connection—come together to form a contemplative picture of a surprisingly fragile Southern family.—*B.D.* (In wide release.)

MARCH OF THE PENGUINS

The French wildlife filmmaker Luc Jacquet spent more than a year chronicling an emperor-penguin colony in Antarctica, and what he discovered was a touching, self-sacrificing ritual of parenthood. Trekking for miles through stunning ice-castle landscapes, Jacquet frames the penguins' mating cycle—from courtship through the birth and rearing of their newborns—as a severe and forbidding ballet that demonstrates the true meaning of survival and determination. Narrated by Morgan Freeman.—*B.D.* (In wide release.)

PATHER PANCHALI

This first film by the masterly Satyajit Ray—possibly the most unembarrassed and natural of directors—is a quiet reverie about the life of an impoverished Brahman family in a Bengali village. Beautiful, sometimes funny, and full of love, it brought a new vision of India to the screen. Though the central characters are the boy Apu (who is born near the beginning) and his mother and father and sister, the character who makes the strongest impression on you may be the ancient, parasitic, storytelling relative, played by the eighty-year-old Chunibala Devi, a performer who apparently enjoyed coming back into the limelight after thirty years of obscurity—her wages paid for the narcotics she used daily. As "Auntie," she is so remarkably likable that you may find the relationship between her and the mother, who is trying to feed her children and worries about how much the old lady eats, very painful. In Bengali.—*P.K.* (Museum of the Moving Image at Socrates Sculpture Park; Aug. 24.)

PRETTY PERSUASION

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

2046

The latest and grandest work from Wong Kar-wai has the form of a sequel to "In the Mood for Love" but is also an amplification of its rhapsodic themes. Tony Leung plays Chow, a writer who moves into a small Hong Kong hotel, befriends the daughter of the owner (Faye Wong), and gradually works his way through a number of equally beautiful women, including a neighboring call girl (Zhang Ziyi) and a gambler with a black glove (Gong Li). "Her past was like the glove she always wore—a mystery," the narrator confides, and therein lies both the enchantment and the niggle of the film. Everything here is made mysterious under compulsion; the gorgeousness of the photography, like the ceaseless throb of the score, throws a veil over each detail, until not just the characters but the settings, too, begin to merge into one another. There are surges into science fiction (courtesy of a story that Chow is writing), but they seem no less anesthetized than the

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smoky world of his girlfriends. What they see in the guy is anybody's guess. In Cantonese, Japanese, and Mandarin.—*A.L.* (8/22/05) (In wide release.)

WEDDING CRASHERS

Jeremy (Vince Vaughn) and John (Owen Wilson), a pair of divorce mediators, spend their summer weekends rolling up to the weddings of people they don't know and becoming the life and soul of the party. The director, David Dobkin, and the writers, Steve Faber and Bob Fisher, kick off with a hectic montage of good will, and the first twenty minutes are rabid with simple pleasure. Then Jeremy and John hit a swish society affair, in which the Treasury Secretary, William Cleary (Christopher Walken), is marrying off one of his daughters, leaving two more (Rachel McAdams and Isla Fisher) to be ogled by our heroes, whereupon the fizz—and the generosity—starts to leak away. Thank heaven for the leading men—especially Vaughn, a hopped-up Gary Cooper who shoots his mouth off with such scattershot brio that he flubs the occasional word, or picks an overheated one ("Erroneous! Erroneous!"), or forgets to pause for breath. This is a dumb-ass picture about dumb-ass men. Still, sometimes ten per cent of your brain is just enough.—*A.L.* (7/25/05) (In wide release.)

Also Playing

THE DUKES OF HAZZARD: In wide release. **HUSTLE & FLOW:** In wide release (7/11/05). **MURDERBALL:** Sunshine Cinema. **REEL PARADISE:** IFC Center. **THE SKELETON KEY:** In wide release. **SKY HIGH:** In wide release. **SYMPATHY FOR MR. VENGEANCE:** Angelika Film Center. **TONY TAKITANI:** Quad Cinema. **THE UNTOLD STORY OF EMMETT LOUIS TILL:** Film Forum.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES

32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5181)—New York theatrical première. Aug. 24-25 at 7 and 9: "Pound," director's cut (1970, Robert Downey). ♦ "New Filmmakers." Aug. 24 at 8: "All the Ships at Sea" (2004, Dan Sallitt). ♦ "*The Onion* Presents." Aug. 25 at 8: "Popaganda: The Art and Crimes of Ron English" (2004, Pedro Carvajal). ♦ New York theatrical première. Aug. 26-30 at 7 and 9 and Aug. 27-28 at 3 and 5: "We Jam Econo: The Story of the Minutemen" (2005, Tim Irwin). ♦ "Essential Cinema." Aug. 26 at 8: "Birth of a Nation" (1997, Jonas Mekas). ♦ Aug. 27 at 5:30: "Triumph of the Will" (1935, Leni Riefenstahl; in German). ♦ Aug. 27 at 8: "The Flowers of St. Francis" (1949, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian without subtitles). ♦ Aug. 28 at 6: Short films by Harry Smith (1941-67). ♦ Aug. 28 at 8: "No. 12: Heaven and Earth Magic" (1950-61, Smith). ♦ "Storefront Films." Aug. 30 at 7:30: "Los Angeles Now" (2004, Phillip Rodriguez).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS

30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100)—"Born in Brooklyn: Rosie Perez." Aug. 24 at 4:30 and 7:30: "Do the Right Thing" (1989, Spike Lee). ♦ Aug. 25 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "The 24 Hour Woman" (1999, Nancy Savoca). ♦ "The Best of the NewFest." Aug. 26 at 4:30: "Little Man" (2005, Nicole Conn). ♦ Aug. 26 at 6:50: "Strange Fruit" (2004, Kyle Schickner). ♦ Aug. 26 at 9:15: "The Aggressives" (2005, Daniel Peddle). ♦ Aug. 27 at 6:50: "Both" (2005, Lisset Barcellos). ♦ Aug. 27 at 9:15: "Zona Rosa" (2005, Dan Castle). ♦ Aug. 28 at 2: "Left Lane" (2005, Samantha Farinella). ♦ Aug. 28 at 4:30: "29th and Gay" (2005, Carrie Preston). ♦ Aug. 28 at 6:50: "The D Word" (2005, Cherien Dabis, Noelle Brower, and Maggie Burkle). ♦ Aug. 28 at 9:15: "Good Boys" (2005, Yair Hochner; in Hebrew). ♦ "Lonely Heart: Philippe Garrel." Aug. 29 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Night Wind" (1999, Garrel; in French). ♦ Aug. 30 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "The Birth of Love" (1993, Garrel; in French).

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—Special screenings. Aug. 24-30 at 1, 2:50, 4:40, 6:30, 8:20, and 10:15: "Elevator to the Gallows" (1957, Louis Malle; in French). ♦ "Summer Samurai." All films are in Japanese. Aug. 24-25 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "Samurai Rebellion" (1967, Masaki Kobayashi). ♦ Aug. 26-27 at 1, 4:40, and 8:20: "Seven Samurai" (1954, Akira Kurosawa). ♦ Aug. 28-29 at 2, 4:40, 7, and 9:40: "The Hidden Fortress" (1958, Kurosawa). ♦ Aug. 30 at 1:10, 5:20, and 9:30: "Yojimbo" (1961, Kurosawa). ♦ Aug. 30 at 3:20 and 7:30: "Sanjuro" (1962, Kurosawa).

IFC CENTER

323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (212-924-7771)—"Waverly Midnights." Aug. 26-27: "The Warriors" (1979, Walter Hill). ♦ "Weekend Classics." Aug. 27-28 at noon: "An Autumn Afternoon" (1962, Yasujiro Ozu; in Japanese). ♦ "The Criterion Collection on Screen." Aug. 29 at 7:30: "Knife in the Water" (1962, Roman Polanski; in Polish).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—"Anime!!" All films are in Japanese. Aug. 24 at 6: "Please Save My Earth" (1994, Kazuo Yamazaki), "Revolutionary Girl Utena," episode one (1997, Kunihiko Ikuhara), and "His and Her Circumstances," episode one (1998, Hideaki Anno). ♦ Aug. 25 at 6: "Samurai 7," episode one (2004, Toshifumi Takizawa), "Samurai Champloo" (2004, Sato Jun'ichi), and "Sergeant Keroro" (2004, Jun'ichi). ♦ Aug. 26 and Aug. 29 at 6: "Evangelion: End of Evangelion" (1997, Anno). ♦ Aug. 27 at 2: "His and Her Circumstances," episode one (1998, Anno), "Marvelous Melmo," episode one (1971, Osamu Tezuka), and "Ranma ½: The Return of the Headmaster from Hell" (1989, Tsutomu Shibayama). ♦ Aug. 27 at 5: "Robot Carnival" (1987, Atsuko Fukushima). ♦ Aug. 28 at 2: "Ghost in the Shell" (1995, Mamoru Oshii). ♦ Aug. 28 at 5: "Gigantor," episode one (1963, Yonehiko Watanabe), "Mobile Suit Gundam," episode one (1979, Yoshiyuki Tomino), and "Fooly Cooly," episode one (2000, Kazuya Tsurumaki). ♦ "112 Years of Cinema." Aug. 24 at 6: "Film's First Years," a program of short films (1893-1907). ♦ Aug. 28 at 5: "Escape from Alcatraz" (1979, Don Siegel). ♦ "Miramax: 25 Years." Aug. 24 at 8: "Good Will Hunting" (1997, Gus Van Sant). ♦ Aug. 24 at 8: "Red" (1994, Krzysztof Kieslowski; in French). ♦ Aug. 25 at 8: "Shakespeare in Love" (1998, John Madden). ♦ Aug. 25 at 8: "White" (1994, Kieslowski; in Polish and French). ♦ Aug. 26 at 6: "Like Water for Chocolate" (1992, Alfonso Arau; in Spanish). ♦ Aug. 26 at 8:30: "Blue" (1993, Kieslowski; in French). ♦ Aug. 27 at 6: "The Crying Game" (1992, Neil Jordan). ♦ Aug. 27 at 8:30: "The English Patient" (1996, Anthony Minghella). ♦ Aug. 29 at 8: "Amélie" (2001, Jean-Pierre Jeunet; in French). ♦ "New Work/New Acquisitions." Aug. 25 at 6: "An Estranged Paradise" (1997-2000, Yang Fudong; in Mandarin). ♦ Aug. 26 at 8: "Painted Fire" (2002, Im Kwon-Taek; in Korean). ♦ Aug. 27 at 2: "Bartleby" (2001, Jonathan Parker). ♦ Aug. 27 at 4: "Black Tape: The Videotape Fariborz Kamkari Found in the Garbage" (2002, Kamkari; in Farsi). ♦ Aug. 27 at 7: "The Himmler Project" (2000, Romuald Karmakar; in German). ♦ Aug. 28 at 2: "Russian Ark" (2002, Aleksandr Sokurov; in Russian). ♦ Aug. 29 at 6: "Love Is a Treasure" (2002, Eija-Liisa Ahtila; in Finnish). ♦ "Newly Preserved." Aug. 29 at 8: "Weddings and Babies" (1958, Morris Engel).

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"Outdoor Cinema" (at Socrates Sculpture Park, on Broadway at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City). Aug. 24 at 8:30: "Pather Panchali" (†). ♦ "Fist and Sword: Martial Arts Film Classics." Aug. 26 at 7:30: "House of Fury" (2005, Stephen Fung; in Cantonese and English). ♦ Repertory nights. Aug. 27-28 at 3: "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian). ♦ Aug. 27 at 7:30 and Aug. 28 at 6:30: "8½" (1963, Fellini; in Italian).

SUNSHINE CINEMA

143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—Midnight movies. Aug. 26-27: "Akira" (1988, Katsuhiro Ôtomo).

THALIA THEATRE

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—"Divas!" Aug. 27 at 6 and Aug. 30 at 8:15:

POP NOTES
ROCKIN' ROBYN

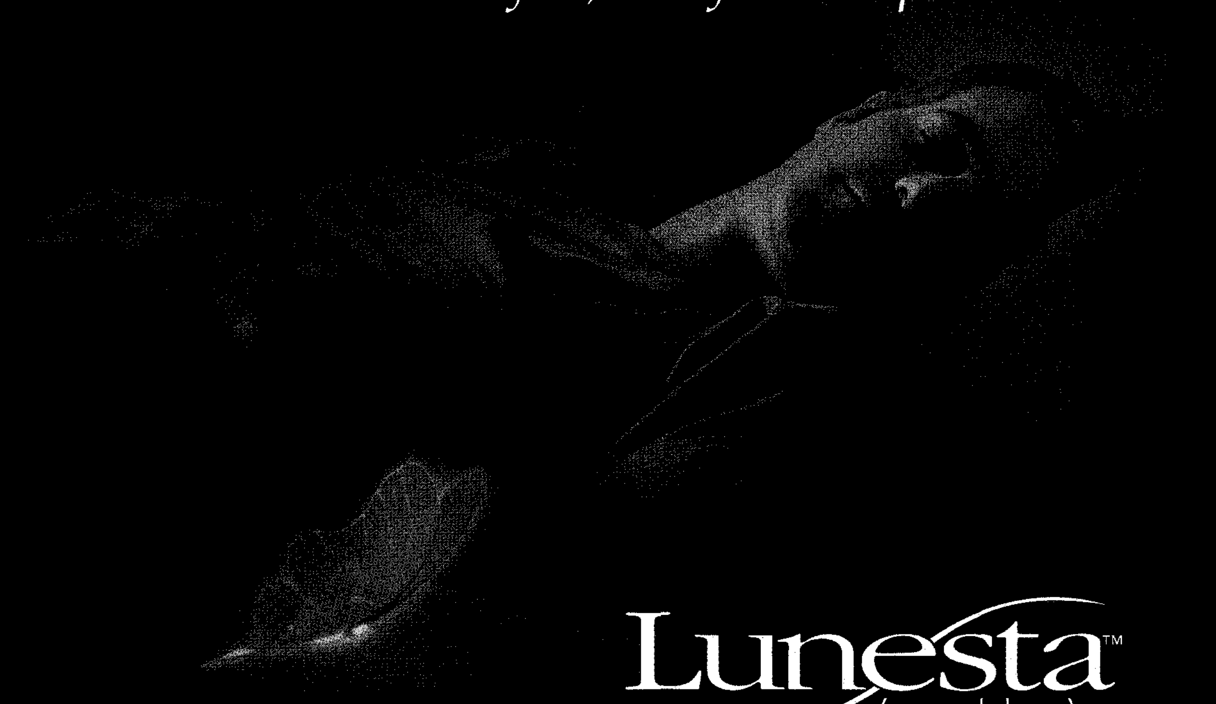
Ten years ago, the press-shy and improbably consistent Swedish pop producer Max Martin was hired to work with a blond teen-age singer. He gave her several great pop songs driven by dance beats, and the two of them sold millions of records in the process. A few years later, Martin did the same thing with a different blond teen-age singer and sold ten times as many records. That second singer was a girl from Louisiana named Britney Spears. Martin's first client, a sixteen-year-old Swede named Robyn Carlsson, had two Top Ten American hits in 1997, including the superlative "Show Me Love," and then disappeared from the U.S. charts, though she went on to release two more albums in Europe. Spears did not disappear, and this must have irked Robyn, a superior singer and dancer whose presentation canted more toward kickboxer than Catholic schoolgirl (which may have something to do with her problems staying on our charts).

At twenty-six, Robyn is enjoying something of a comeback in Europe, thanks to a self-titled album that rivals her best work with Martin. Having absorbed a generous amount of hip-hop and American culture in the past ten years, Robyn has created a tart, minimal, defiant pop record that sits comfortably between the avant-garde R. & B. of Missy Elliott and the cheerleader pop of Gwen Stefani. The album begins with a spoken-word introduction straight out of a boxing match (neatly titled "Curriculum Vitae"): "World-record holder with a high score of two gazillion in Tetris! Two-time recipient of the Nobel Prize for super-foxiest female ever and wartime consigliere to the Cosa Nostra!" The first song on the record, the effervescent single "Who's That Girl?" was produced by the brother-and-sister duo known as the Knife; most of the rest of the record was produced by Klas Åhlund. In either event, the dominant sound is streamlined and electronic, and the songs are flecked with clever quotes from nineteen-eighties pop songs by Visage, the Cure, and Bronski Beat. There is a running theme here of wounded pride—spelled out most clearly in the songs "Handle Me" and "Crash and Burn Girl"—in which Robyn upbraids someone unworthy of her attentions. The offending party could easily be an individual or the entire American pop market. At the moment, "Robyn" is available only as an import, but American labels would do well to kiss and make up with Robyn right now. Britney is fairly busy anyway.

—*Sasha Frere-Jones*

new

Peaceful, restful sleep.



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(eszopiclone) CIV
1, 2 AND 3 MG TABLETS

Introducing Lunesta,™ a brand new sleep aid that can change your nights.

Even when your restless mind keeps you awake, brand new Lunesta can give your body and mind the soothing sleep you need. Lunesta not only helps most people fall asleep fast, it helps you sleep all through the night. Peacefully, uninterrupted. Lunesta works quickly, so you should only take it right before bed. And Lunesta is non-narcotic, and the first and only prescription sleep aid approved for long-term use. Of course, do not use sleep medicines for extended periods without first talking to your doctor.

Now's the time to catch the sleep you need. If you've been hesitant to take a prescription sleep aid, be sure to ask your doctor about Lunesta.

Important Safety Information: Be sure you have at least eight hours to devote to sleep before becoming active. Until you know how you'll react to Lunesta, you should not drive or operate machinery. Do not use alcohol while taking Lunesta. All sleep medicines carry some risk of dependency. Side effects may include unpleasant taste, headache, drowsiness and dizziness. *See important patient information on the next page.*

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(eszopiclone)©
1, 2 AND 3 MG TABLETS

Please read this summary of information about LUNESTA before you talk to your doctor or start using LUNESTA. It is not meant to take the place of your doctor's instructions. If you have any questions about LUNESTA tablets, be sure to ask your doctor or pharmacist.

LUNESTA is used to treat different types of sleep problems, such as difficulty in falling asleep, difficulty in maintaining sleep during the night, and waking up too early in the morning. Most people with insomnia have more than one of these problems. You should take LUNESTA immediately before going to bed because of the risk of falling.

LUNESTA belongs to a group of medicines known as "hypnotics" or, simply, sleep medicines. There are many different sleep medicines available to help people sleep better. Insomnia is often transient and intermittent. It usually requires treatment for only a short time, usually 7 to 10 days up to 2 weeks. If your insomnia does not improve after 7 to 10 days of treatment, see your doctor, because it may be a sign of an underlying condition. Some people have chronic sleep problems that may require more prolonged use of sleep medicine. However, you should not use these medicines for long periods without talking with your doctor about the risks and benefits of prolonged use.

Side Effects

All medicines have side effects. The most common side effects of sleep medicines are:

- Drowsiness
- Dizziness
- Lightheadedness
- Difficulty with coordination

Sleep medicines can make you sleepy during the day. How drowsy you feel depends upon how your body reacts to the medicine, which sleep medicine you are taking, and how large a dose your doctor has prescribed. Daytime drowsiness is best avoided by taking the lowest dose possible that will still help you sleep at night. Your doctor will work with you to find the dose of LUNESTA that is best for you. Some people taking LUNESTA have reported next-day sleepiness.

To manage these side effects while you are taking this medicine:

- When you first start taking LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine, until you know whether the medicine will still have some effect on you the next day, use extreme care while doing anything that requires complete alertness, such as driving a car, operating machinery, or piloting an aircraft.
- Do not drink alcohol when you are taking LUNESTA or any sleep medicine. Alcohol can increase the side effects of LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine.
- Do not take any other medicines without asking your doctor first. This includes medicines you can buy without a prescription. Some medicines can cause drowsiness and are best avoided while taking LUNESTA.
- Always take the exact dose of LUNESTA prescribed by your doctor. Never change your dose without talking to your doctor first.

Special Concerns

There are some special problems that may occur while taking sleep medicines.

Memory Problems

Sleep medicines may cause a special type of memory loss or "amnesia." When this occurs, a person may not remember what has happened for several hours after taking the medicine. This is usually not a problem since most people fall asleep after taking the medicine. Memory loss can be a problem, however, when sleep medicines are taken while traveling, such as during an airplane flight and the person wakes up before the effect of the medicine is gone. This has been called "traveler's amnesia." Memory problems have been reported rarely by patients taking LUNESTA in clinical studies. In most cases, memory problems can be avoided if you take LUNESTA only when you are able to get a full night of sleep before you need to be active again. Be sure to talk to your doctor if you think you are having memory problems.

Tolerance

When sleep medicines are used every night for more than a few weeks, they may lose their effectiveness in helping you sleep. This is known as "tolerance." Development of tolerance to LUNESTA was not observed in a clinical study of 6 months' duration. Insomnia is often transient and intermittent, and prolonged use of sleep medicines is generally not necessary. Some people, though, have chronic sleep problems that may require more prolonged use of sleep medicine. If your sleep problems continue, consult your doctor, who will determine whether other measures are needed to overcome your sleep problems.

Dependence

Sleep medicines can cause dependence in some people, especially when these medicines are used regularly for longer than a few weeks or at high doses. Dependence is the need to continue taking a medicine because stopping it is unpleasant.

When people develop dependence, stopping the medicine suddenly may cause unpleasant symptoms (see *Withdrawal* below). They may find they have to keep taking the medicine either at the prescribed dose or at increasing doses just to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

All people taking sleep medicines have some risk of becoming dependent on the medicine. However, people who have been dependent on alcohol or other drugs in the past may have a higher chance of becoming addicted to sleep medicines. This possibility must be considered before using these medicines for more than a few weeks. If you have been addicted to alcohol or drugs in the past, it is important to tell your doctor before starting LUNESTA or any sleep medicine.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal symptoms may occur when sleep medicines are stopped suddenly after being used daily for a long time. In some cases, these symptoms can occur even if the medicine has been used for only a week or two. In mild cases, withdrawal symptoms may include unpleasant feelings. In more severe cases, abdominal and muscle cramps, vomiting, sweating, shakiness, and, rarely, seizures may occur. These more severe withdrawal symptoms are very uncommon. Although withdrawal symptoms have not been observed in the relatively limited controlled trials experience with LUNESTA, there is, nevertheless, the risk of such events in association with the use of any sleep medicine.

Another problem that may occur when sleep medicines are stopped is known as "rebound insomnia." This means that a person may have more trouble sleeping the first few nights after the medicine is stopped than before starting the medicine. If you should experience rebound insomnia, do not get discouraged. This problem usually goes away on its own after 1 or 2 nights.

If you have been taking LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine for more than 1 or 2 weeks, do not stop taking it on your own. Always follow your doctor's directions.

Changes In Behavior And Thinking

Some people using sleep medicines have experienced unusual changes in their thinking and/or behavior. These effects are not common. However, they have included:

- More outgoing or aggressive behavior than normal
- Confusion
- Strange behavior
- Agitation
- Hallucinations
- Worsening of depression
- Suicidal thoughts

How often these effects occur depends on several factors, such as a person's general health, the use of other medicines, and which sleep medicine is being used. Clinical experience with LUNESTA suggests that it is rarely associated with these behavior changes.

It is also important to realize it is rarely clear whether these behavior changes are caused by the medicine, are caused by an illness, or have occurred on their own. In fact, sleep problems that do not improve may be due to illnesses that were present before the medicine was used. If you or your family notice any changes in your behavior, or if you have any unusual or disturbing thoughts, call your doctor immediately.

Pregnancy And Breastfeeding

Sleep medicines may cause sedation or other potential effects in the unborn baby when used during the last weeks of pregnancy. Be sure to tell your doctor if you are pregnant, if you are planning to become pregnant, or if you become pregnant while taking LUNESTA.

In addition, a very small amount of LUNESTA may be present in breast milk after use of the medication. The effects of very small amounts of LUNESTA on an infant are not known; therefore, as with all other prescription sleep medicines, it is recommended that you not take LUNESTA if you are breast-feeding a baby.

Safe Use Of Sleep Medicines

To ensure the safe and effective use of LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine, you should observe the following cautions:

1. LUNESTA is a prescription medicine and should be used ONLY as directed by your doctor. Follow your doctor's instructions about how to take, when to take, and how long to take LUNESTA.
2. Never use LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine for longer than directed by your doctor.
3. If you notice any unusual and/or disturbing thoughts or behavior during treatment with LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine, contact your doctor.
4. Tell your doctor about any medicines you may be taking, including medicines you may buy without a prescription and herbal preparations. You should also tell your doctor if you drink alcohol. DO NOT use alcohol while taking LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine.
5. Do not take LUNESTA unless you are able to get 8 or more hours of sleep before you must be active again.
6. Do not increase the prescribed dose of LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine unless instructed by your doctor.
7. When you first start taking LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine, until you know whether the medicine will still have some effect on you the next day, use extreme care while doing anything that requires complete alertness, such as driving a car, operating machinery, or piloting an aircraft.
8. Be aware that you may have more sleeping problems the first night or two after stopping any sleep medicine.
9. Be sure to tell your doctor if you are pregnant, if you are planning to become pregnant, if you become pregnant, or if you are breastfeeding a baby while taking LUNESTA.
10. As with all prescription medicines, never share LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine with anyone else. Always store LUNESTA or any other sleep medicine in the original container and out of reach of children.
11. Be sure to tell your doctor if you suffer from depression.
12. LUNESTA works very quickly. You should only take LUNESTA immediately before going to bed.
13. For LUNESTA to work best, you should not take it with or immediately after a high-fat, heavy meal.
14. Some people, such as older adults (i.e., ages 65 and over) and people with liver disease, should start with the lower dose (1 mg) of LUNESTA. Your doctor may choose to start therapy at 2 mg. In general, adults under age 65 should be treated with 2 or 3 mg.
15. Each tablet is a single dose; do not crush or break the tablet.

Note: This summary provides important information about LUNESTA. If you would like more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist to let you read the Prescribing Information and then discuss it with him or her.

Rx only

SEPRACOR

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"Eve" (1962, Joseph Losey). ♦ Aug. 27 at 8:30 and Aug. 30 at 6: "Pandora's Box" (1929, G. W. Pabst; silent).

WALTER READE THEATRE
Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Aug. 31: "I Love to Singa: Cartoon Musicals." Aug. 24 at 1, Aug. 25 at 6:30, and Aug. 30 at 3: "The Triplets of Belleville" (2003, Sylvain Chomet; in French). ♦ Aug. 24 at 3, Aug. 25 at 4:30 and 8:30, and Aug. 30 at 1: "Allegro Non Troppo" (1977, Bruno Bozzetto; in Italian). ♦ Aug. 24 at 5 and 9:30, Aug. 25 at 1, and Aug. 29 at 4: "American Pop" (1981, Ralph Bakshi; in English, Hebrew, and Russian). ♦ Aug. 24 at 7: "The MGM (Cartoon) Musical," a program of short cartoons (1934-54). ♦ Aug. 25 at 3 and Aug. 29 at 2 and 8:30: "The Tune" (1992, Bill Plympton). ♦ Aug. 26 at 1 and 6 and Aug. 27 at 3:30: "Warners Cartoons Go Pop," a program of short cartoons (1936-57). ♦ Aug. 26 at 3:30, Aug. 27 at 8:30, Aug. 28 at 1, and Aug. 29 at 6: "Columbia Cartoons' Musical Miscellany," a program of short cartoons (1932-53). ♦ Aug. 26 at 8, Aug. 27 at 1 and 6, and Aug. 28 at 3:30: "Warners Cartoons Go Classical," a program of short cartoons (1943-57). ♦ Aug. 28 at 6: "Fantasia" (†). ♦ Aug. 28 at 8:30: "Iwerks by Design," a program of short cartoons (1928-37).

READINGS AND TALKS

"WORD FOR WORD"
Filip Bond, the author of "Bleeding Pinstripes: A Season with the Bleacher Creatures of Yankee Stadium," and the sportscaster Len Berman, whose latest book is "Spanning the World: The Crazy Universe of Big Time Sports, All-Star Egos, and Hall of Fame Bloopers," face off at this outdoor reading series in Bryant Park. (Sixth Ave. at 42nd St. Aug. 24 at 12:30.)

MICHAEL HALSBAND
The photographer discusses his latest collection, "Surf Book," which captures the leaders and cult figures of the sport. (Barnes & Noble, Sixth Ave. at 21st St. No tickets necessary. Aug. 24 at 7.)

RICHARD HAW
The historian's latest book is "A Cultural History of the Brooklyn Bridge," and on Aug. 24 at 7 he practically stands in its shadow as he talks about the span that has seized the public's imagination since its opening, in 1883, when it was called the eighth wonder of the world. (Melville gallery, South Street Seaport, 213 Water St. No tickets necessary.)

"HOWL! ALL STAR PERFORMANCE JAM"
A reading by the rock-and-roll animal Lou Reed and other downtown artists, including Keren Ann, Nico Muhly, and Ben Taylor. (Joe's Pub, 425 Lafayette St. 212-539-8777. Aug. 28 at 9:30.)

NICK MC DONELL
The author of the drug-addled novel "Twelve" (written when he was seventeen) reads from his sophomore effort, "The Third Brother," which finds a college-aged protagonist encountering family and national tragedies (it's set, in part, around 9/11). (The Half King, 505 W. 23rd St. No tickets necessary. Aug. 29 at 7.)

MC NALLY ROBINSON BOOKSELLERS
Joe Meno reads from his novels "How the Hula Girl Sings" and "Hairstyles of the Damned," and Marlon James offers selections from his début novel, "John Crow Devils." David Rees, the creator of the comic strip "Get Your War On," is the host. (52 Prince St. No tickets necessary. Aug. 30 at 7.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

PARTY TIME
The annual West Indian carnival celebrations at the end of the summer fill the streets of Brooklyn with a vast array of colorful costumes and the dulcet sound of steel bands. The main event is a parade down Eastern Parkway on Labor Day, and during the weeks leading up to it a great deal of work goes into making the outfits and preparing the bands. Horace Morancie, a seventy-six-year-old native Trinidadian who emigrated here in 1954 and who has attended a carnival every year since he was five, leads a pre-party behind-the-scenes tour. He'll visit the mas camps, where the costumes are made, and the pan yards, where the bands practice, in East Flatbush and Crown Heights. Morancie promises a chance to play the steel drums. "A simple tune," he says, "like 'Mary Had a Little Lamb,' just to show them how it's done." (Aug. 27 at 3. For more information, call 718-788-8500, ext. 208.)

"HOWL!"
The countercultural arts festival in the East Village comes to a loud close this week with scores of theatre, dance, film, and concert events along with numerous celebrations of Allen Ginsberg's poem, on the fiftieth anniversary of its creation. Events take place throughout the neighborhood, but Tompkins Square Park is the epicenter on the final weekend. Highlights include Wigstock, the party that's always a drag, on Aug. 27, and the Bluegrass Ball, on Aug. 28. (See Night Life and Readings and Talks for more listings. A complete schedule can be found at www.howlfestival.com. Through Aug. 28.)

DIVYA SRINIVASAN

ON THE HORIZON

THE THEATRE
HOME AND ABROAD
Sept. 13

In Richard Greenberg's new comedy, "A Naked Girl on the Appian Way," Jill Clayburgh and Richard Thomas are parents whose lives are disrupted when their grown children return from a year in Europe. The play opens Oct. 6. (212-719-1300.)

NIGHT LIFE
JAZZ BY THREES
Sept. 20

E.S.T. (the Esbjörn Svensson Trio—from Sweden, as the name suggests) is unafraid to take a new approach to jazz. The group, led by the pianist Svensson and also featuring a bassist and a drummer, favors a democratic dynamic and embraces the trappings of rock and pop, making it the Scandinavian answer to the Bad Plus. The group will play a rare New York show next month at Joe's Pub. (212-539-8777.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
TO SCALE
Sept. 21-27

Two potent young pianists, Evgeny Kissin and Lang Lang, will perform along with the New York Philharmonic and its music director, Lorin Maazel, during the orchestra's first week of concerts this fall. (212-875-5656.)

MOVIES
FADE TO RED
Sept. 23-Oct. 9

The forty-third New York Film Festival will open with George Clooney's second directorial effort, "Good Night, and Good Luck," a black-and-white drama about the newsman Edward R. Murrow's attempt to topple Senator Joseph McCarthy. The festival also includes Lars Von Trier's "Manderlay" and Steven Soderbergh's "Bubble," and will close with Michael Haneke's "Hidden." (www.filmlinc.com.)

ART
FACES OF BRUGES
Oct. 12-Dec. 31

Of the thirty-odd portraits attributed to the Netherlandish master Hans Memling (ca. 1440-1494), twenty are coming to the Frick for "Memling's Portraits." The small panels—often of the notables of Bruges (where Memling spent his adult life)—depict still, luminous faces elevated by Memling's careful attentions. (212-288-0700.)

It's time to clear the air about natural gas.

Power Natural gas is the principal source for new power generation in North America. Cleaner burning than oil and coal, it produces 50% fewer emissions. Today, natural gas accounts for about 40% of the energy BP produces globally, making us the country's largest producer and supplier.

Security BP's natural gas comes from places closer to home, like Colorado, Kansas and the Gulf of Mexico. And our natural gas facility in Trinidad and Tobago is making a significant contribution to the energy demand of the U.S. In 2005, we plan to invest $1 billion in new natural gas production in the U.S.

The Future While BP continues to develop alternative energy sources like hydrogen and solar, we believe natural gas is a bridge to clean, renewable energy. And for the world's growing economies, natural gas has the potential to meet energy requirements while reducing emissions that impact global warming.

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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
SACRED AND PROFANE

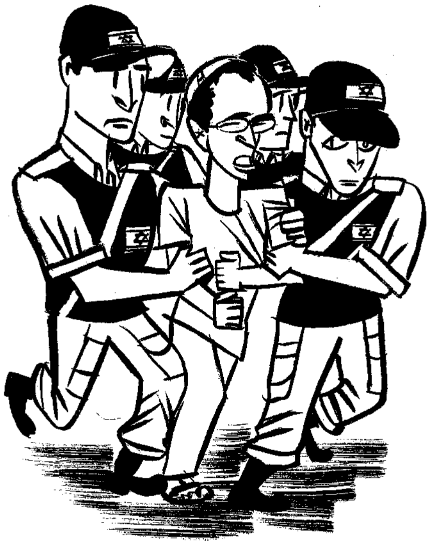
After the Arab-Israeli wars of 1967 and 1973, the Israeli political establishment vowed that the existence of the state would never again be in doubt. Eventually, one bulwark of its strategic defense would be the construction of dozens of settlements in the newly occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip—first as small, stealthily built outposts, then as larger, more established "facts on the ground." As the rationale evolved, these settlements were intended to buffer a tiny state from foreign attack, to shift some population away from the coastal plain, and, finally, to undermine Palestinian contiguity. Over the years, Israel's principal leaders, both Likud and Labor, participated in the expansion of the settlements, but the most committed architect, the truest believer, was Ariel Sharon.

Sharon recognized that he could not build the new settlements by calling on the traditional secular élites, which were then in decline: the kibbutzniks, the intelligentsia, and the labor movements. Instead, he relied on a new breed of idealist. As he writes in his memoir, "Warrior":

> By the 1970s the pioneering spirit that in the past had found its home among the Labor Zionists was fast declining. The drive to return to the homeland and reclaim and work the land that had been instrumental in the Zionist enterprise was simply not any longer the great inspiring ethos it had previously been. But now another stream of ideals had been generated, not from the socialist tradition but from the religious tradition.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

Sharon made common cause with Rabbi Zvi Yehuda Kook, the leader of a Jerusalem yeshiva, whose teachings defied the traditional Orthodox thinking that the coming of the Messiah must precede the establishment of Israel. Kook's followers interpreted the victory of 1967 as a miracle, and believed that a Jewish return to Biblical lands could hasten redemption. They were the first to move into Hebron (to be close to the Tomb of the Patriarchs) and the first to go to Nablus (the Biblical city of Shechem). In time, hundreds of thousands of Israelis were living in the territories.



The majority of the Israelis who went to the West Bank and Gaza were hardly messianic. Among them were thousands of recent immigrants who moved to the occupied territories not to stake an ideological claim to a "Greater Israel" but to take advantage of cheaper housing and government subsidies; their dreams were suburban, not Biblical. Yet the most ardent settlers—the most political, aggressive, and self-regarding—portrayed themselves as players in an eschatological drama. Encouraged by politicians like Sharon (he called the settlers "the best of Israel"), they saw themselves as the true inheritors of the original Zionist spirit, pioneers willing to live in a hostile land that was theirs by right of God. Among the most radical, an obsession with land deemed sacred outstripped their respect for the state and its institutions. Over time, they became a divisive force, resented by many in Israeli society for the way they disdained the secular majority even while depending on its defense and its largesse.

So when, finally, Sharon told the nine thousand settlers of Gaza that their presence amid 1.3 million impoverished and hostile Palestinians was no longer tenable if Israel was to remain secure and a majority Jewish state, the shock was profound. The settlers were not merely unfortunates caught in a civil case of eminent domain, forced to give up the homes and the communities that they had built. Many of them simply could not believe that Sharon, who had run for office promising never to sell them out—who had said, "To abandon them would go against Jewish history and morality"—would act. He didn't have the right: the promises of God (as the settlers understood them) trumped the shifting demands of a democratic state—to say nothing of the rights of their fellow human beings across the wall, in Rafah, Khan Yunis, and Gaza City.

Thousands of settlers left Gaza peacefully, tearfully, and with a heavy dignity, but others—along with hundreds of protesters from the West Bank and even the United States—did not. There were those who did violence to memory and reason by comparing the Israel Defense Forces (who behaved with extraordinary tact and compassion) to Nazis, and their own plight to the destruction of European Jewry. In Kfar Darom, some settlers humiliated young soldiers, pelting them with debris and spraying them with insulating foam and weapon-cleaning fluids; in Neve Dekalim, settlers forced troops to drag them out of the main synagogue, thereby creating a sacralized TV-ready image of victimhood. Worst of all, in the West Bank a settler murdered four Palestinians, and then said, "I'm not sorry for what I did. I hope someone also kills Sharon."

A genuine sympathy for the families compelled to uproot themselves and find new homes and lives—an enormous burden, no matter how subsidized—is right and natural, but it does not diminish the necessity of the evacuation. The original decision to build Israeli outposts in Gaza was a moral, political, and strategic disaster. Even the spiritual claims of the Gaza settlers were dubious. In Biblical terms, Gaza was not primarily Jewish territory; the Philistines lived there. One of the interesting complexities of Zionism is that the majority of the Israeli population has always lived on the Mediterranean coast, close to, rather than inside, Biblical Israel. Nor should anyone need reminding that the Jews who have been removed from Gaza are not the only displaced people in the area. The Palestinians of Gaza are mostly refugees, or descendants of refugees, from Jaffa, Ramla, Haifa, and other cities and villages that are in Israeli hands. As Danny Rubenstein wrote in *Ha'aretz* last week, approximately thirty thousand Palestinians in Gaza alone have been displaced in recent years by Israeli forces.

In the coming weeks, disengagement will surely bring a heightened sense of danger in Israel and in the occupied territories. Senior Israeli intelligence and defense officials fear everything from an attempt on Sharon's life to yet another intifada, this time instigated by Hamas and other militant groups. The commanders of those groups show little inclination to set aside their politics of absolutism and terror. "Our enemy should understand that the state of Palestine is not Gaza," Abu Walid, an Islamic Jihad leader, said last week. "It's from the river to the sea"—from the Jordan to the Mediterranean.

As part of disengagement, four remote settlements in the West Bank will have been evacuated by next week, but no one in Israel expects Sharon to begin dismantling major settlements there in the immediate future. Domestic politics will not permit it. There will likely be an election next year, and Benjamin Netanyahu, who resigned from the Cabinet on the eve of disengagement, has begun to pull past Sharon in polls of Likud Party members. In order to survive, Sharon will have to either regain the lead or, perhaps, take the "big bang" option, bolting Likud and isolating it as a bastion of the far right, while creating a centrist coalition led by the three "patriarchs" of Is-

MARILYN MANQUÉ
HARDWARE

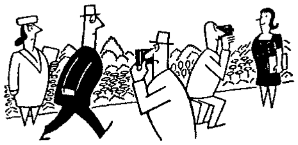
raeli politics: Sharon; Shimon Peres, of Labor; and Tommy Lapid, of the secularist Shinui Party.

In the nineteen-nineties, the era of the Oslo accords, a dream persisted of imminent peace—a state for the Palestinians, security and recognition for the Israelis. The Gaza disengagement makes plain the distance between that dream and its reality, and how traumatic it is to conduct earthly politics where so much is sacred to so many.

—*David Remnick*

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

SHAKEDOWN STREET



“Sex and the City” stopped shooting in 2003, but for the residents of Perry Street between Bleecker and West Fourth the show hasn’t gone away. Twice a day (three times on weekends), around fifty tourists, the majority of them women and about half of them foreign, stream down the block and form a line across the street from No. 66: Carrie’s house. (Although Carrie Bradshaw, the character played by Sarah Jessica Parker, was said to live on East Seventy-third Street, her comings and goings were actually filmed on Perry.) The tourists take turns sitting on the stoop and posing for pictures, and after twenty minutes or so they return to a bus on Hudson, near the Magnolia Bakery, eager to move along to Hotel Venus, the next stop on what’s known as the “Sex and the City” Tour. They pay thirty-seven dollars for the privilege.

The tour has been operating for almost four years, but recently, in the absence of any new episodes, its popularity has surged, to the point where a thousand camera-wielding strangers now visit the block each week. Try as they may to be unobtrusive (and the tour guides have established some ground rules about keeping in a single file and whispering), the sightseers can’t help but disturb the neighbors, some of whom like to sit on their own stoops and read the newspaper.

“We keep hoping they’ll get bored and go away, but they don’t,” Betty Rinckwitz, the president of the Perry Street Block Association, said the other day. “So, since they didn’t, we called them up and said, ‘Come on, you’re a real pest.’ ”

Greenwich Village residents, who tend to like everything just so, have long been familiar with the inconveniences brought on by movie and TV crews, and also with the effectiveness of a little petulance in extracting a “contribution” to the cause of neighborhood beautification. You take a bad situation, add a few hundred dollars, and make it good—call it the Village shakedown.

So Gerald Banu, the vice-president and treasurer of the Perry Street association, met earlier this month with Georgette Blau, the head of the tour company, to talk philanthropy. Banu was aware, for instance, that a disruptive presence on nearby Charles Street—MTV’s filming of “Making the Band 2,” during which a dog fell to its death—had been mitigated by “a very nice donation,” as he put it, which made possible the installation of a retro Bishop’s Crook lamppost in place of the standard cobrahead. Perry Street, meanwhile, was still stuck with cobraheads, and, as a matter of fact, there’s one right in front of No. 66. Just think how much nicer all those photos would look with an elegant lamp in the foreground.

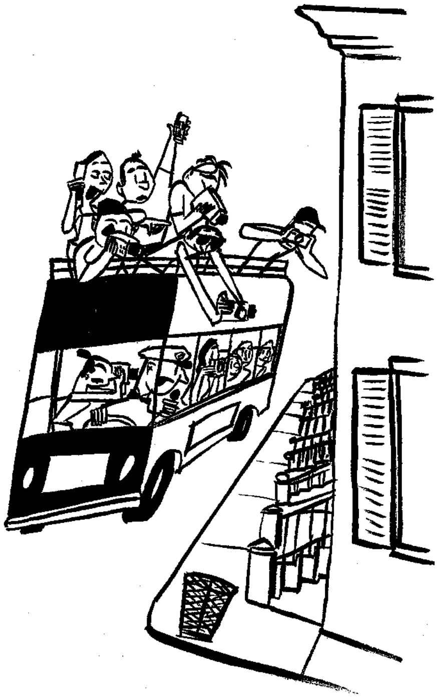
“I told them, ‘You know, just saying you’re sorry is not enough for people,’ ” Banu said last week. “ ‘They’ve got to see something tangible.’ And I was very pleased when all of a sudden we got this major donation.”

In a letter addressed to the block association the day after the meeting, Blau wrote proudly of the “15+ jobs” that the “Sex and the City” Tour had created, before announcing, “We have agreed to pay $1,000/month to the Perry Street Block Association.” The letter came with a check for five thousand dollars—“a lump sum to expedite the purchase of a new street lamp”—and another for nine hundred dollars, to be put toward the block’s annual fall bulb planting.

“We sort of politely ask them for it,” Rinckwitz explained. “And Gerry Banu is six feet six, so when he politely asks you, you listen. My husband calls it extortion.”

Blau, for her part, seemed genuinely contrite. “I felt horrible, because it’s a very quiet street,” she said. “Of course, you know Carrie doesn’t live there, really. There are actually real people living there.” (True enough. The owner of 66 Perry has called Blau on a number of occasions to complain personally—for example, about the time some tourists sat on her fence and broke it.)

In the grand context of neighborhood rackets, the Perry Street settlement may not amount to much, but in local terms it’s a coup. Marilyn Dorato, the head of the Greenwich Village Block Associations, an umbrella organization overseeing dozens of smaller community groups, maintains a Film Shoots Report Card, cataloguing the neighborhood impact—and relative generosity—of various production companies. Big studios, she says, can typically be counted on for a onetime donation of perhaps two thousand dollars, while independent houses offer substantially less. MTV, after the Charles Street incident, gave thirty-five hundred. (“Law and Order,” she says, is the worst: “They are frequent, persistent, obnoxious, and cheap.”)



Perry Street

“I’m sort of curious why only Perry Street is benefitting,” Dorato said. “I’m going to ask Gerry about that, because the tour affects West Eleventh Street, too—the exhaust from the buses is bad for our children.”

Last Tuesday afternoon, as a larger-than-usual tour group swarmed Perry Street, a couple of locals standing in front of a barbershop eyed the intruders with some weariness.

"It's a pain in the ass," one said.

"She actually lives right around the corner, you know," the other said, referring to Sarah Jessica Parker, who has a town house on Charles Street. "Maybe we should tell them."

"I've tried—they just laugh. They think I'm kidding."

—*Ben McGrath*

TROUBADOURS
PICK SIX

In 1999, *Playboy* asked the grudging guitar hero, prolific songwriter, and self-described "folk dinosaur" Richard Thompson to name his ten favorite popular songs of "the millennium." Feeling mischievous, he submitted a list that began in 1050 and included such hits as the thirteenth-century round "Sumer Is Icumen In." Thompson never did hear back from *Playboy*, but a year later he came up with the notion of performing these and other super-oldies. He called the show "1,000 Years of Popular Music," and covered everything from Orazio Vecchi to Britney Spears, with a little Gilbert and Sullivan along the way. "I wouldn't say it's our forte, but it goes down surprisingly well," Thompson said recently. "I mean, the sheer nerve of tackling light opera."

Thompson was standing in an aisle of the Virgin Megastore in Union Square, having been badgered into performing another curatorial stunt, a browse-and-buy session. Pick six disks, any six. And talk, please. It is almost as great a pleasure to hear Richard Thompson talk as it is to hear him play "The Mikado" on the guitar, but because he mumbles and stammers a bit, speaks quickly, dryly, and Englishly, and, in this instance, had to do so over the din of South Asian house music, you got the impression that the pleasure wasn't entirely his. In black cargo shorts, a black short-sleeved shirt, and an Adidas ball cap, he wandered through the rock-and-pop section, sourly appraising the "M"s. "Richard Marx. Joni Mitchell—well, we don't want to be too obvious. Motörhead." He looked out over the ridges and valleys of recorded music. "Let's go to another section."

After a brief stop in the gospel department ("This is white stuff," Thompson said. "What do white people know about gospel, anyway?"), he found himself amid even whiter stuff, staring at a prodigious selection of his own music, from his days, in the sixties and seventies, with Fairport Convention and with his ex-wife Linda. Folk. "I've got so much coming out this year it's kind of strange," he said. He started to enumerate—a new record called "Front Parlour Ballads," a movie soundtrack, a boxed set, and three DVDs, including one of "1,000 Years of Popular Music"—and then exclaimed, "Whoa! *Rat!*"

Yes, a record-store rat, about the size of a wah-wah pedal. The rat disappeared under the blues section, and Thompson followed it to a Willie Dixon compilation. "Buy this one," he said. "I got invited to his seventy-fifth-birthday party, and I asked him, 'What are you up to?' And he said, 'I'm making a record.' 'That's great. Have you written all the songs?' He said, 'I've got two thousand unrecorded songs.' Gulp. Here I was thinking I was quite prolific."

He moved down the aisle. He handed over the next selection with a say-no-more nod: "The Chronological Little Miss Cornshucks, 1947-1951."

"Am I familiar with this and I just don't know it?" a fellow-browser asked.

"No," Thompson said. "I don't think you are." (Post-purchase research revealed that Little Miss Cornshucks was a blues singer, who often appeared onstage carrying a picnic basket.)

Thompson had momentum. He passed a display of new releases and, without breaking stride, reached for "The Essential Cyndi Lauper."

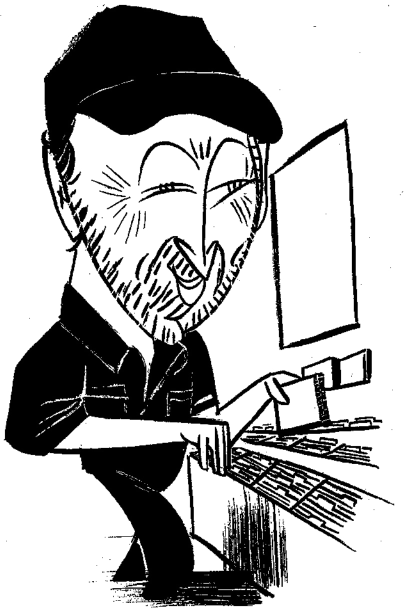
"Are you serious?"

"Absolutely. She's great."

He paused at the New Age section but kept his hands at his sides. "People who buy New Age music buy it literally by the yard," he said. "They just buy up half a dozen disks indiscriminately. So if you can come up with a New Age cover, something bland and airbrushed and pastoral, you can sell an extra twenty thousand records a year."

Reggae: Thompson does not disdain it. He drew up at "Desmond Dekker: The Early Beverley's sessions, 1963-1968." Four down. On a whim, he snapped up another, "Reggae Pulse, the Heartbeat of Jamaica." "This is the ultimate reggae collection," he said, but you could hear the regret in his voice, a sense that maybe he'd gone too far in the reggae department.

"I'm a big fan of prewar French music," he went on. "When my dad came back from the war, he brought back a lot of French 78s. In France, of the top ten things to do, listening to music is about number fifteen." He scanned the offerings. "This one for the cover, perhaps," he said, choosing a CD with a photograph of a beautiful woman. It was called "Quelqu'un M'a Dit." " 'Somebody Told Me,' right?"



Richard Thompson

"Yes," Thompson said. "Somebody told me that I have large breasts." He put that one back and picked up a disk with a picture of a fellow who looked a bit like Clark Gable. It was Jean Sablon. "C'est Si Bon: Original Recordings 1933-1950."

"Buy this one," Thompson said. "What a smoothie, eh? Nice mustache. That's six." He shrugged.

Before leaving the store, Thompson paused at the boxed-set section, an imposing wall. (His own box will feature, he said, "lots of extras. Bells,

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whistles.” Outtakes? “Oh, forever.” Studio conversations? “Conversations, yes. *Thoughts.*”) “You have to really like someone a lot to buy a box,” he said, regarding one containing the complete recordings of Petula Clark. “You know, I met Petula Clark the other day. I was at Buckingham Palace. There was a reception for the English music industry, and for some reason I got invited. About five of your favorite royals were circulating about.” The Queen was there, and Thompson was introduced. “It was short and sweet. She said, ‘Well, tell me, what was Nick Drake really like?’ ”

Seriously?

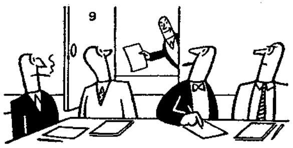
“No. She said, ‘And what do you do?’ I said, ‘I’m a singer-songwriter,’ because there was a roomful of guitar players—Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Jeff Beck—and I didn’t want to be another guitar player. She said, ‘Oh, you do both! At the same time! How wonderful for you.’ So I said, ‘I hope it’s wonderful for other people as well.’ She said, ‘Ha ha ha ha.’ Then she went, you know, ‘Next!’ ”

On the way out, Thompson remarked that he is quite fond of Franz Ferdinand. Make it seven.

—*Nick Paumgarten*

INK

NOT A WORD



Turn to page 1,850 of the 1975 edition of the New Columbia Encyclopedia and you’ll find an entry for Lillian Virginia Mountweazel, a fountain designer turned photographer who was celebrated for a collection of photographs of rural American mailboxes titled “Flags Up!” Mountweazel, the encyclopedia indicates, was born in Bangs, Ohio, in 1942, only to die “at 31 in an explosion while on assignment for *Combustibles* magazine.”

If Mountweazel is not a household name, even in fountain-designing or mailbox-photography circles, that is because she never existed. “It was an old tradition in encyclopedias to put in a fake entry to protect your copyright,” Richard Steins, who was one of the volume’s editors, said the other day. “If someone copied Lillian, then we’d know they’d stolen from us.”

So when word leaked out that the recently published second edition of the New Oxford American Dictionary contains a made-up word that starts with the letter “e,” an independent investigator set himself the task of sifting through NOAD’s thirty-one hundred and twenty-eight “e” entries in search of the phony. The investigator first removed from contention any word that was easily recognized or that appears in Webster’s Third New International; the remaining three hundred and sixty words were then vetted with a battery of references.

Six potential Mountweazels emerged. They were:

earth loop—*n. Electrical* British term for GROUND LOOP.

EGD—*n.* a technology or system that integrates a computer display with a pair of eyeglasses . . . abbreviation of eyeglass display.

electrofish—*v.* [*trans.*] fish (a stretch of water) using electrocution or a weak electric field.

ELSS—*abbr.* extravehicular life support system.

esquivalience—*n.* the willful avoidance of one’s official responsibilities . . . late 19th cent.: perhaps from French *esquiver*, “dodge, slink away.”

eurocreep—*n. informal* the gradual acceptance of the euro in European Union countries that have not yet officially adopted it as their national currency.

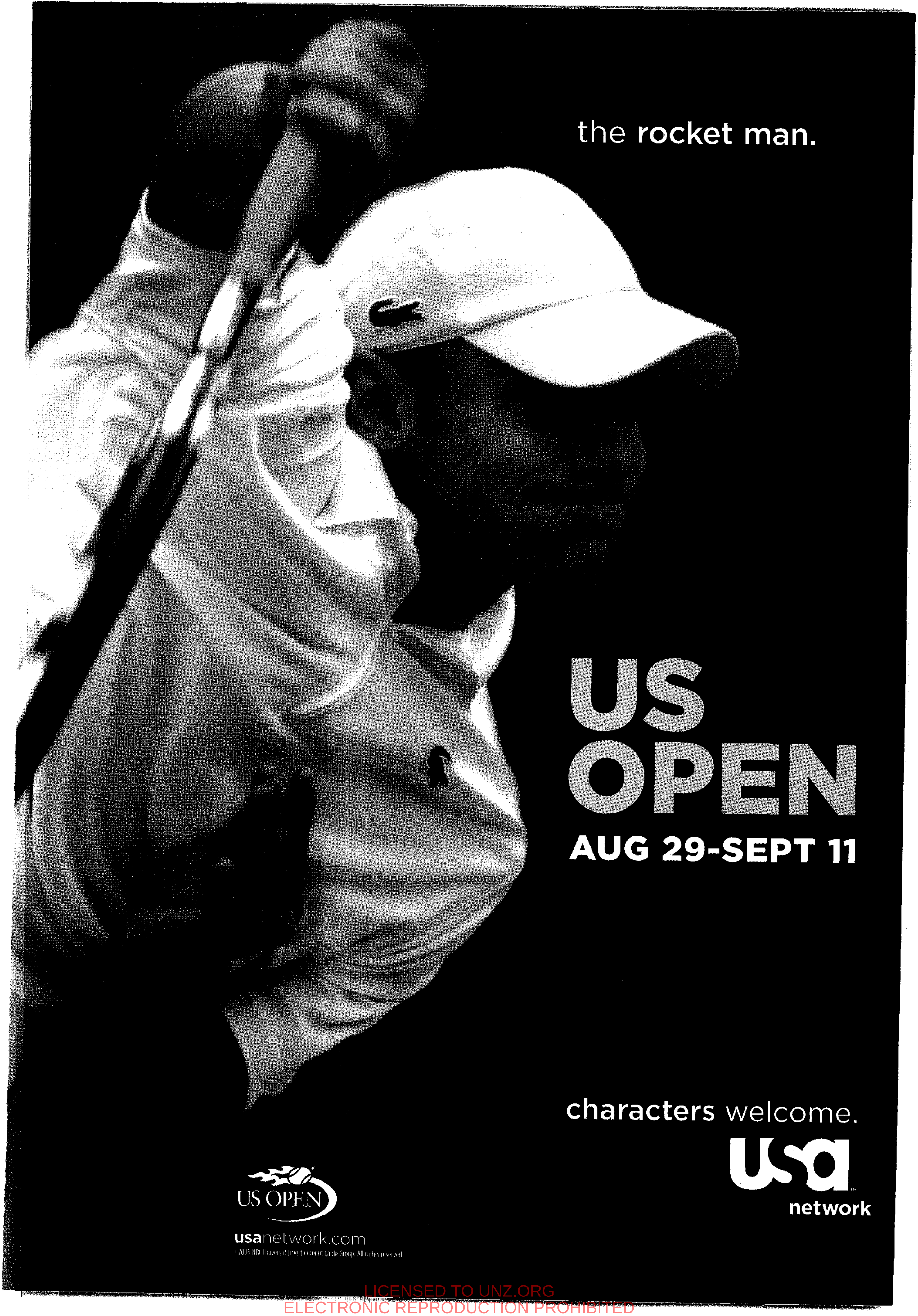
The six words and their definitions were e-mailed to nine lexicographical authorities. Anne Soukhanov, the U.S. General Editor of Encarta Webster’s, was the first to weigh in. “Ess-kwa-val-ee-*ohnce*—I want to pronounce it in the French manner—is your culprit,” she said. Six other experts also fingered “esquivalience,” citing various rationales. “It’s just trying a little too hard,” said Wendalyn Nichols, the editor-in-chief of the newsletter “Copy Editor” and a onetime editorial director of Random House Reference. “If it’s derived from *esquiver*, it wouldn’t have that ending. Nothing linguistically would give rise to the ‘l.’ ” The *Times*’ crossword-puzzle editor, Will Shortz, explained, “I simply can’t believe such a thing goes back to the nineteenth century.” Steve Kleinedler, a senior editor of the American Heritage Dictionary, said, “The stress pattern is strange.” The most personal of the rationales belonged to Eli Horowitz, an editor of the literary anthology “The Future Dictionary of America,” who complained, “I had to read it a few times, and I resent that.”

There were two dissenters among the experts. “ ‘Esquivalience’ is too elaborate,” said Sidney Landau, the author of “Dictionaries: The Art and Craft of Lexicography” and the editor of the Cambridge Dictionary of American English. “If someone made that up, they’re nuts.” Landau chose “ELSS,” he said, “for the simple reason that it’s short. A dictionary wouldn’t want to waste more than a line or two.” Meanwhile, Garret Thomson, a self-described “code monkey,” or programmer, for Pseudodictionary.com, a site that calls itself “the dictionary for words that wouldn’t make it into the dictionaries,” picked “electrofish,” calling it “clunky-sounding.”

A call was placed to Erin McKean, the editor-in-chief of the second edition of NOAD. Upon being presented with the majority opinion, McKean confirmed that “esquivalience” was a fabricated word. She said that Oxford had included it in NOAD’s first edition, in 2001, to protect the copyright of the electronic version of the text that accompanied most copies of the book. “The editors figured, We’re all working really hard, so let’s put in a word that means ‘working really hard.’ Nothing materialized, so they thought, Let’s do the opposite.” An editor named Christine Lindberg came up with “esquivalience.” The word has since been spotted on Dictionary.com, which cites Webster’s New Millennium as its source. “It’s interesting for us that we can see their methodology,” McKean said. “Or lack thereof. It’s like tagging and releasing giant turtles.”

As for “esquivalience”’s excesses, McKean made no apologies. “Its inherent fakeitude is fairly obvious,” she said. “We *wanted* something highly improbable. We were trying to make a word that could not arise in nature.” Indeed, “esquivalience,” like Lillian Virginia Mountweazel, is something of a maverick. “There shouldn’t be an ‘l’ in there. It should be esqui*var*ience,” McKean conceded. “But that sounds like it would mean ‘slight differences between racehorses.’ ”

—*Henry Alford*



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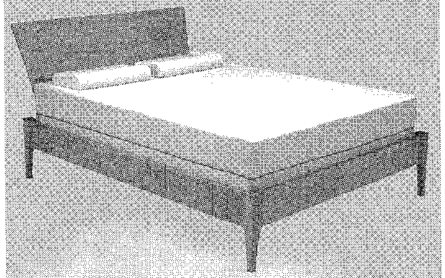

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THE WAYWARD PRESS

RIGHT HOOK

Hugh Hewitt admits he's biased—and wants liberals in the media to say they are, too.

BY NICHOLAS LEMANN

If one were to confer the distinction of Most Famous Conservative Journalist Whom Liberals Have Never Heard Of, a leading candidate would be Hugh Hewitt: author (of six books, most of which get to the point so efficiently that he brings a new one out every eighteen months or so); columnist (for the online edition of *The Weekly Standard* and the evangelical magazine *World*); blogger; and syndicated radio talk-show host. Hewitt, an unlined, inquisitive-looking, white-haired forty-nine-year-old with an amiable but relentless manner, lives and works in Orange County, California. In addition to his journalism, he practices law at a firm that bears his name, teaches at Chapman University School of Law, in Orange County, lectures and consults in the conservative-media world, is an elder in his church, serves on the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, and holds a series of honorary titles, such as California State Sommelier.

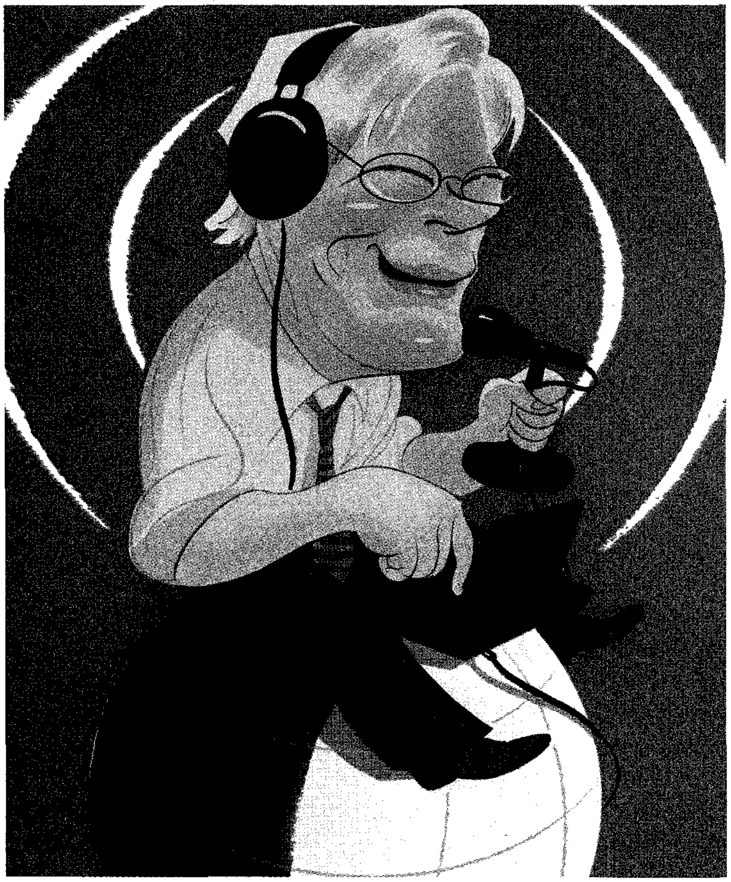
Hewitt stands for something more than just hyperactivity. Conservatives love to complain about journalism. Lately, they have been not only complaining more full-throatedly but also devising, with more energy than before, their own version of what journalism ought to look like: faster, more opinionated, more multimedia, and less hung up on distancing itself from the practice of politics than the daily-newspaper and network-news versions. Hewitt is at the center of this effort. If there is any battle to be waged next month over the confirmation of John Roberts, an old friend of Hewitt's, as a Supreme Court Justice, the conservative press (and Hewitt in particular) will be an enthusiastic participant. The idea is that it will make for a good test run of conservative journalism's enhanced capabilities, which would then be redeployed frequently. Hewitt's world is journalism's alternate universe.

Hewitt's radio employer, Salem Communications, owns a hundred and four radio stations, covering twenty-four of the country's twenty-five major markets, and purveys the work of eight talk-show hosts, five of them mainly conservative and three mainly Christian. Salem, whose headquarters are in Camarillo, California, is led by two brothers-in-law who are graduates of Bob Jones University; it is publicly held, and growing swiftly enough to have joined the handful of radio-station groups that are bunched together far behind the two national leaders, Clear Channel and Infinity Broadcasting. Hewitt is not the highest-rated member of the Salem stable—he is second to the film critic and writer Michael Medved—but he has an estimated weekly audience of seven hundred thousand, on a hundred and twelve stations. He can be heard just about everywhere except New York and Washington. "The Hugh Hewitt Show" is important enough to have attracted guests on the order of Dick Cheney and Karl Rove; governors, senators, and congressmen appear on it just about every day, and so do journalists. Hewitt thinks of himself as the most liberal-friendly of the Salem hosts—he calls his program "National Public Radio for conservatives."

I met Hewitt on a Sunday night in May, in New York; he was in town to attend a convention and to work on his project of building a conservative journalistic infrastructure outside of news organizations. He introduced me to a young man named Chuck DeFeo, who had just begun working at Salem. DeFeo spent most of his career working for John Ashcroft, when Ashcroft was a Missouri senator and then Attorney General; last year, he was "eCampaign Manager" for the Bush-Cheney campaign, in charge of adapting traditional grass-roots political organizing to the Internet. Now, with help from Hewitt, he is planning to turn a Salem Web site called Beyond the News into an ambitious—what?

The impression I got, over dinner at a

midtown steak house, was that eventually—and ideally, from Hewitt's point of view—conservatives all over the country would read Beyond the News every morning, perhaps instead of their local newspapers. In its current form, Beyond the News looks like a conservative opinion site that also carries news columns. It often highlights stories that one hasn't read in the daily newspapers, and it tends to emphasize trends that conservatives find disturbing. (Last week, the headlines included "ILLEGAL ALIEN GRANTED ASYLUM BECAUSE HE'S GAY" and "ISRAEL BEGINS GAZA PULLOUT, HAMAS CELEBRATES.") Soon, there will be links to opportunities for political activity; clicking will generate a letter to a politician or provide the call-in number for a talk show. Hewitt says that he thinks of Beyond the News as "a group blog that's also a news magazine, with activist tools attached." The distinctions that the "mainstream media" hold dear—between news and opinion, between journalism and political participation—would be immaterial, and you'd have an unapologetic blend of journalism and politics. And that, in Hewitt's view, would merely emulate what has been standard practice in the mainstream media.



Hewitt sees the leading news organizations as "a self-perpetuating élite."

ERIC PALMA

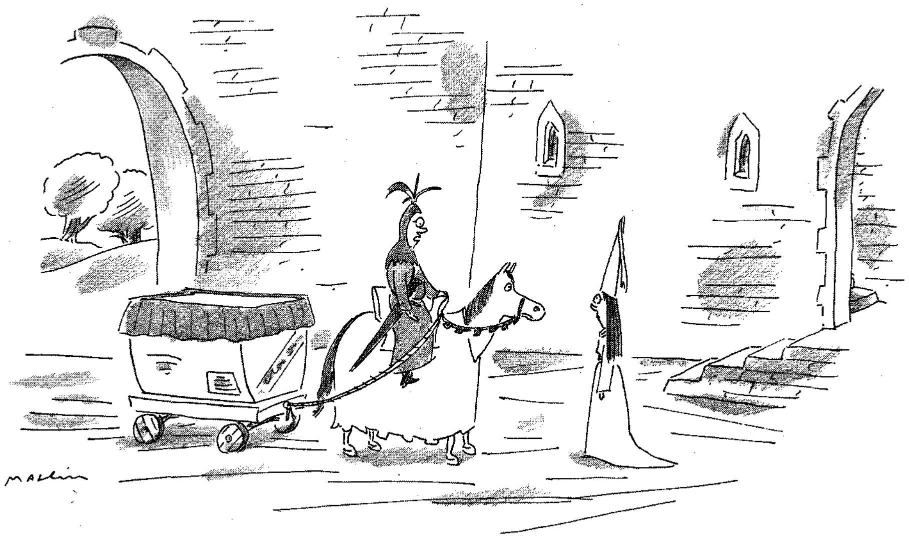
The bulked-up Beyond the News is supposed to début in September, in time for John Roberts's confirmation hearings, but even now the site reveals a world unlike the one encountered in the American press—a world in which stem-cell research is already producing medical advances that don't entail using human embryos, in which coalition forces and the Iraqi government are making steady progress, in which the recent terrorist attacks in London were a demonstration of the necessity and rightness of President Bush's foreign policy, in which many respectable scientists are questioning Darwinism. Sometimes this version of the news is presented straightforwardly, but usually it's noted that the mainstream media, once again, got it wrong. In that sense, Beyond the News routinely breaks through another of journalism's traditional barriers, the one between reporting and press criticism. Hugh Hewitt is especially fond of doing that.

Hewitt plans to make the Roberts hearings the main topic of his radio show for as long as they last—not because he thinks Roberts's confirmation is in any danger but because they will provide him with the chance to delegitimatize the enemies of conservative judges. He fired back quickly when NARAL, the abortion-rights group, came out against Roberts's nomination, and during the hearings he plans to make particular fun of "the four Clouseaus and the new Nixon" —the Democratic senators Edward Kennedy, Joseph Biden, Patrick Leahy, and Richard Durbin, and Charles Schumer ("He's got the five o'clock shadow")—whenever they criticize Roberts. If in the process he damages Biden's chances to be President, and Durbin's and Schumer's chances to be the Senate Democratic leader, so much the better. It's unlikely that either the senators or liberal interest groups opposed to Roberts will win Hewitt over. He is so deeply conservative that it is almost impossible to get him to accept the liberal point of view of the world on any point. His level of skepticism about conservatism-affirming information is, on the other hand, nearly zero, because it feels so true to him.

When I approached Hewitt to ask whether I could spend time with him in connection with this article, he proposed a bargain: he'd agree if, later, I'd coöperate for an article that he wanted to write about me. Things get very media-on-media very quickly in Hewitt's world. His blog, in keeping with the conventions of the form, links to many other blogs (Christian blogs, military blogs, Republican blogs), and he regularly urges his listeners to start blogs of their own.

Hewitt broadcasts his radio show from an unremarkable suite of offices, occupied by his indispensable producer, a man known on the air and in cyberspace as Generalissimo Duane; a soundman; and a couple of student interns in baggy shorts and backward baseball caps. Duane, a sandy-haired man in his thirties who wears a goatee and polo shirts, books the guests and also operates his own blog. Decorations include a map of the United States with stickers showing the stations that broadcast the program, posters of Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin, and a few pieces of military and sports memorabilia, but on the whole the office feels like a place that springs to life, with the tightly controlled joviality of an operating room, only for the few hours a day that Hewitt is there.

Hewitt sits in front of a computer screen set to the Washington *Post's* home page or, sometimes, to Free Republic, a conservative "news/activism" site. During breaks in the broadcast, on another computer, Hewitt posts to his own blog, often to comment on something that one of his guests has just said or, perhaps,



"I couldn't find fresh dragon, so I got frozen."

• •

on something that just showed up on Free Republic. It strikes me that blogging, more than radio, is Hewitt's central passion.

I spent an afternoon in the booth with Hewitt. He arrived a few minutes early, so that he could pre-tape an interview with Dana Milbank, of the Washington *Post*, formerly the paper's White House correspondent and now a political columnist. It was Milbank's first appearance on "The Hugh Hewitt Show"; indeed, he says that he had never heard of the show when Generalissimo Duane called and asked if he'd go on to discuss his column. Hewitt loves to book people he regards as liberal journalists. "I'm the only one who does this much," he says. "I go back repeatedly to well-known lefties, because it's just good radio." The liberal guests fall into a few subcategories: "center left" opinion journalists (Hewitt considers himself "center right"), such as Peter Beinart, the editor of *The New Republic;* "'way left" bloggers, such as Matthew Yglesias, who calls himself "A Proud Member of the Reality-Based Community," and who also writes for *The American Prospect;* and, more rarely, people with supposedly non-ideological jobs with mainstream news outlets.

When somebody like Milbank gamely steps up to the plate, Hewitt uses the appearance as an opportunity to pursue one of his cherished goals, what he calls "transparency" in journalism. He has no problem presenting himself as an active, loyal Republican—so why won't people who work in the mainstream own up to views that surely affect their work? A week earlier, Hewitt had achieved something of a triumph by getting Terry Moran, the chief White House correspondent for ABC News, to say that he thinks the press is biased against the military. (Hewitt's wife, whose name for public consumption is "the fetching Mrs. Hewitt," comes from a Marine Corps family; they were married, in 1982, in the base chapel at Camp Pendleton.) "The Hugh Hewitt Show" is not unlike fishing for catfish: you put out a lot of lines and see which one gets a bite. In this case, Hewitt immediately posted a quote from the Moran interview on his blog, and not long afterward Generalissimo Duane posted a full transcript. The money quote was "There is, Hugh, I agree with you, a deep anti-military bias in the media. One that begins from the premise that the military must be lying, and that American projection of power around the world must be wrong. I think that that is a hangover from Vietnam, and I think it's very dangerous." Hewitt asked other guests what they thought of Moran's statement, and before long the blogosphere had worked itself up into a condition of mid-level outrage.

Hewitt's No. 1 priority the day I was there was criticizing a compromise on filibusters for judicial nominees that the two parties had just struck in the Senate. He began by asking Milbank, who was speaking by telephone from Washington, about it, and then he moved on to the subject of Terry Moran. "All right, Dana," he said. "Last week I had Terry Moran of ABC News, White House correspondent, on, and he said this about the press and the military. I wanted to get your take on it. Here's Terry Moran." Generalissimo Duane played the sound bite. "Do you think, Dana Milbank, there's a deep-seated anti-military bias in the media?"

"You know, that comment's gotten an extraordinary amount of publicity," Milbank said. "I must say that I've always found Terry to be perfectly sensible, but I do think he's sort of coming out of left field on that one."

"Well, actually, he's accusing the media of coming out of left field," Hewitt said. Hewitt does not, like Bill O'Reilly, become righteously indignant—he's never confrontational, always friendly—but he is persistent, and now, even though Milbank hadn't given any extra lift to the Terry Moran affair, he had provided Hewitt with a chance to try to get some more transparency. After a little more back-and-forth, Hewitt said, cocking his head quizzically, "Now, part of the interview with Terry, we talked a lot about the White House press corps, and their animus to Bush, and how deep-seated it was, and how long it had run, and he dodged the question repeatedly about whether it's worse for Bush than it was for Clinton. I'm sure it's no surprise for you, Dana Milbank, that you're viewed by center-right people as exceptionally hostile to the President. Why do you think that is?"

"Well, I don't know," Milbank said. "I mean, I'm not part of the White House press corps anymore, and I'm off doing a column now. But I don't dispute the premise of your question, and people would see me as particularly hostile, because I have been particularly hostile. But what's the basis of comparison? When I was covering the Gore campaign, the left wing thought I was particularly hostile to him. I'd rather use words like 'skepticism' than 'hostility,' but I don't apologize at all for being skeptical and highly suspicious of what people in authority are telling me, regardless of who's in power."

"What do you think of Bush as a man?" Hewitt said. "Do you think he's a smart guy?"

Now Hewitt had entered the realm of questions that reporters hate to answer in public. "Oh, how could that be disputed?" Milbank said, a note of caution creeping into his voice. "You don't get this far in life, no matter what advantage you started with, without being extraordinarily canny. He's not a wise man in a bookish sense, but he's extraordinarily savvy, and he's got a very good horse sense."

"Do you think he's sincere about his religious belief? Because today's lead editorial in the New York *Times* casts doubt on that. It suggests that this whole stem-cell position, about which you wrote today, I think, or yesterday as well, is somehow just pandering. Do you think he's sincere in his religious expression?"

Milbank wasn't going to give Hewitt that one. "Oh, yeah," he said. "Who would I be to suggest that anybody is not sincere in what they say about their religion?"

They had some more inconclusive exchanges, and then Hewitt asked, "Do you think they intentionally misled the American people into war?"

"That's like asking me, 'Is the President genuine about his faith?'" Milbank said. "I don't want to get into what's the motive in some guy's head. I can't know that. I have to deal in the realm of what's knowable."

Hewitt wasn't giving up. "But you do have an opinion on it, right?"

"Every human being—we're not objects, and we have to at some point in our heads make judgments, but I'm not going to sit here and tell your viewers that I know the answer to that question. I don't know the answer."

Now, from Hewitt's point of view, he was getting somewhere. "We're talking journalism a lot, over the last couple of weeks," he said. "Why are M.S.M.—mainstream media—so reluctant to state their opinions about things when they have them? . . . It's almost a fetish among M.S.M. not to state opinions, for fear, I think, of arming skeptics of your ability to put those opinions aside. Is that what you're afraid of?"

"I just don't see it as a fear." Milbank was sounding a little rattled. "I see it as, I don't know the answer to the questions, so if I'm going to tell you an answer here I'm just b.s.ing. I'd rather stick with the realm of what I know."

Hewitt, moving in for the kill, abruptly asked, "Who'd you vote for?"

"I voted for Chuck Hagel."

"For President?"

"I did. I wrote him in."

"Really?"

"I did."

Bingo. The conversation went on for a while longer, but that was the sound bite. "Carve the Hagel quote out, would ya?" Hewitt shouted to Generalissimo Duane after Milbank had hung up. "We'll play it a couple of times." Before the day's show was over, Duane had posted a full transcript of the Milbank interview on his blog, under the headline "WASHINGTON POST'S DANA MILBANK ON WHY HE'S PERCEIVED AS THE MOST HOSTILE REPORTER TOWARDS GEORGE W. BUSH." The following morning, Hewitt mentioned the interview on his blog, and a few other conservative bloggers picked it up in the next few days. In Hewitt's most recent book, "Blog: Understanding the Information Reformation That's Changing Your World," he credits bloggers (whom he compares in influence to Martin Luther) with bringing down Trent Lott as Senate Majority Leader and Dan Rather as anchor of the "CBS Evening News," and with discrediting a crucial part of John Kerry's account of his service in the Vietnam War. This wasn't going to be a victory on that scale, but maybe it would put another little chink in the edifice of the establishment press's reputation for disinterestedness.

Hewitt often begins "The Hugh Hewitt Show" with a big, booming hello, accompanied by one of his signature "hooks," such as "Morning glory and evening grace, America!" or "This is Hugh Hewitt, the long carbine of reason in the West." It's important to Hewitt that he doesn't operate one of those ranting, right-wing-for-effect talk shows, which is how he views "The John & Ken Show," his direct competitor in the Los Angeles market. "The John & Ken Show," which is on a high-wattage AM station, KFI, spends a lot of time on things like the Michael Jackson trial and illegal-immigrant bashing, and has a local audience many times the size of Hewitt's. Hewitt calls its hosts "pot-and-pan-bangers"; he devotes almost no time to pop culture. Still, this is talk radio. Hooks, running jokes, regularly recurring friend or guests with colorful nicknames, rock-music lead-ins, and staged astonishment are the tools of the craft.

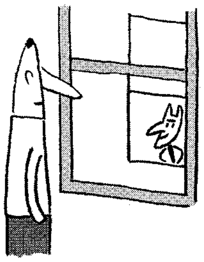
Hewitt is also a direct, unapologetic political actor. The day I was in the studio, news was breaking in Washington: the Senate Democrats were successfully filibustering to delay a vote on the confirmation of John Bolton as Ambassador to the United Nations. (President Bush appointed Bolton this month while Congress was in recess, without his having been confirmed.) The Bolton story gave Hewitt a pretext to reopen the issue of the perfidy of the seven Republicans who, a few days earlier, had voted for the compromise on filibustering judicial nominees.

There was a delicious way to do this so that it might have consequences: Pat DeWine, the son of Mike DeWine, an Ohio Republican senator and one of the perfidious ones, was running in a special congressional election in an Ohio district reached by a station in Cincinnati on which "The Hugh Hewitt Show" airs. Generalissimo Duane had booked one of Pat DeWine's more conservative Republican primary opponents, Tom Brinkman, an Ohio state representative, on the show that day. "Will the sins of the father be visited on the son?" Hewitt mused, as he teased the segment.

"Pat has had no problem pulling every string from every lobbyist, having lobbyist-funded receptions in D.C., using his father's push and pull everywhere he can for this race," Brinkman said. "And now, when an important question comes along, he's going to divorce himself from his father. I'd have to say, 'Wait a minute here, you can't have it both ways. Either you're with them or you're against them; don't try to play us for a bunch of saps.'" He went on to use the airtime to give listeners a broader sense of his views. "I have never, ever, ever voted for a tax increase in any way. I am a hundred per cent for the Second Amendment, have supported that all the way. I'm totally pro-life and I'm for limited government. We had a symbolic vote for the Fourteenth Amendment in Ohio for our bicentennial. . . . I voted against the symbolic vote because I said I'm going to send a signal against the judicial activism that has occurred in this country because of the Fourteenth Amendment."

That last bit was off message for Hewitt, since the Fourteenth Amendment, adopted in 1868, is the one that gave full citizenship to freed slaves, and Hewitt is a strong advocate of an inclusive Republican Party. He brought the interview to an end. (In the primary, held a couple of weeks later, DeWine was defeated by Jean Schmidt, a former state representative, who went on to win the seat in Congress.)

I asked Hewitt once whether he would consider running for office, and he quickly said no. "It's not as influential as the media," he said. "Elected officials try to influence the public through my show." He was in politics, however, long before he was in journalism. He grew up in Warren, Ohio, a steel town, not far from Youngstown; his father was a Republican, though not politically active, and a lawyer on the management side of labor disputes; his mother, who was also a lightly affiliated Republican, was a homemaker. She was Catholic, and Hewitt was brought up in a Catholic Church where the post-Vatican II spirit hadn't fully penetrated. He attended parochial schools through high school. He'll never write a memoir about his complicated feelings about his childhood of Mass and Cleveland Browns games. It was paradise, and, anyway, he doesn't have complicated feelings. Unlike his parents and his two brothers, he was intensely interested in politics, and his inclinations were always conservative.



During his senior year of college, at Harvard, after he didn't get into any of the law schools he was most interested in, he used a chain of connections that started with the son of one of his professors to get a job first as a research assistant to David Eisenhower, who was writing a book about his grandfather's military campaigns, and then, soon afterward, as an assistant to Eisenhower's father-in-law, Richard Nixon. He worked in the old Western White House, in San Clemente, California—and occupied an office that had just been vacated by Diane Sawyer, who was also an assistant of Nixon's in his Elba days. "It was like the British system of being a private secretary to a statesman," Hewitt says. "Wasn't I lucky! To have the chance to see how a great man thinks and works."

By the time Nixon moved back East, in 1980, Hewitt had been admitted to the University of Michigan Law School. But in 1989, by which time he had graduated, clerked for two judges, and held a series of increasingly important legal positions in the Reagan Administration (for a year, he worked with John Roberts in the White House counsel's office), Nixon asked him to come back to Orange County to oversee the opening of the Nixon Library, in Yorba Linda. In that job, Hewitt had to conduct a weekly press briefing and tours for visiting dignitaries. One of these was Jay Lawrence, a reporter at KFI. He introduced Hewitt to the station's program director, who told him he had a great radio voice, among other assets, and offered him a show.

Hewitt went on the air, at KFI, in the winter of 1990. This was conservative talk radio's creation moment, when Rush Limbaugh, who went into national syndication in 1988, was taking off. In 1992, the PBS affiliate in Los Angeles, KCET, decided that one of its programs needed some ideological diversity and brought Hewitt in to provide it. By this time, Hewitt had completed a gradual religious shift from Catholicism to Presbyterianism, his wife's faith. Like many conservative Republicans of his generation, he was increasingly drawn to evangelical Protestantism. And Hewitt had come to dislike the political direction that the Catholic Church had taken. ("They were wrong on the Soviet Union, wrong on nuclear weapons, and wrong on poverty," he says.) He hosted a series on religion for KCET that appeared nationally on PBS, which, during the mid-nineties apotheosis of Newt Gingrich, had, in Hewitt's view, been looking for ideological diversity, too.

The KCET experience is the anecdotal mother lode of Hewitt's disillusionment with the mainstream media. (His former colleagues there say they don't remember the anecdotes that are so deeply engraved in Hewitt's mind.) "The newsroom was overwhelmingly liberal," he says. "We went through a series of co-hosts. Patt Morrison"—a veteran reporter and columnist for the Los Angeles *Times*—"was there the whole time. Patt's a hard-left, *hard-left* feminist. And she was supposed to be in the middle." There were three commentators, with Hewitt on the right and someone else on the left. On Election Night in 2000, Hewitt told me, there were cheers in the studio every time a state went for Gore.

A couple of incidents, Hewitt said, took him past the limit of what he could tolerate. Once, he says, his producers refused to allow Arianna Huffington—"I've known three Ariannas," Hewitt says, "and this was Arianna No. 1," the wife of a Republican Senate candidate—to come on his show to defend herself regarding a nanny problem that had emerged at the height of her husband's campaign. Another time, Hewitt lost his temper on the air, which he prides himself on never doing, when a liberal defense lawyer denied that there was a connection between pornography and pedophilia. In 2001, Hewitt left KCET and consolidated his talking at Salem Communications, which had already launched "The Hugh Hewitt Show."

After the day I spent in his studio, Hewitt and I went out for dinner with a group of his friends, to an Italian restaurant that he described as one of the few nice places to eat in Orange County that aren't part of a chain. The guests included Mark Roberts, a minister blogger who is a friend of Hewitt's; Hewitt's state senator, John Campbell, who is now running for a seat in Congress that just opened up; and Hewitt's fellow Salem host Dennis Prager, who was reared as an Orthodox Jew and is now a leading advocate of Jews allying with evangelical Christians, and a copious dispenser of conservative political opinion and personal advice. Hewitt referred to the group, half kidding, as "the religious right." We sat on a glassed-in patio, so that we could smoke cigars after dinner, and talked happily about Orange County real estate, the awfulness of the Los Angeles *Times*, Hewitt's least favorite publication, and the tension between science and religion.

The next morning, Hewitt and I met for breakfast. We started by talking about his hopes for Beyond the News, and that quickly got him onto the subject of his related hopes for the further decline of the mainstream media.

I asked him whether he really thinks that the mainstream media are indistinguishable from Beyond the News in their proclivity to blend journalism and politics. He unhesitatingly said yes. “It’s a seamless web,” he said. “It has always been a seamless web. The Washington *Post* is an activism tool for liberals. The New York *Times* is an activism tool for ’way liberals. Polling is an activism tool. Every time the Washington *Post* or the New York *Times* runs a poll, they are attempting to influence legislation. They are engaged in activism. It’s mediated, though. Our way is not mediated.”

Hewitt sees the leading news organizations as “a self-perpetuating élite,” made up of ideologically compatible people. He knew aspiring journalists in college, he told me. “They were all hard-edged leftists, and they all went into the business,” he said. “I could never possibly rise in journalism as a center-right person. It would have been suicidal, in fact. Journalism just went further and further left because of who went into it.” He is willing to concede that the people who run mainstream media outlets probably don’t openly order up coverage for ideological reasons—it’s more about selection, timing, and deployment of resources. Hewitt always has in his head a list of occurrences that he thinks of as big stories but which didn’t appear in the papers. In May, for example, Indra Nooyi, the president and chief financial officer of PepsiCo, gave the graduation address at Columbia Business School. Part of the speech was a somewhat labored analogy of five world continents to the five fingers of a hand. After a great offering up of caveats, Nooyi ventured into controversy by saying, “Because the U.S.—the middle finger—sticks out so much, we can send the wrong message unintentionally.” Talk radio and the blogosphere treated this as a major and inexcusable incident of America-bashing by a prominent corporate executive.

Hewitt is absolutely unwilling to concede that the work of journalists isn’t deeply affected by their opinions. “The vanity that people can divorce themselves from their bias is just that, vanity,” he said. “Len Downie”—the executive editor of the Washington *Post*—“doesn’t vote. So what? That pose is fundamentally dishonest. He’s asserting a greater level of objectivity, or truthtelling, than—well, let’s just say that I am unwilling to trust the conclusions of somebody who won’t tell me their opinions and background.”

If Hewitt does write about me, he will surely ask me to reveal whom I voted for in the last Presidential election. I might as well get started with the transparency now. Although I do vote, I’m not going to tell him. Like the house of the Lord, journalism has many mansions, and the one Hewitt inhabits is surely one of them. But in another of the mansions, reportorial journalism, the object is different. One can be curious or not, fair-minded or not, intellectually honest in the use of evidence or not, empathetic or not, imprisoned by a perspective or not. For a reportorial journalist to announce his voting record is to undermine his work. It dishonors the struggle to do it right.

Another thing I can confidently predict is that after this article appears activists on the left will put Hugh Hewitt forward as an example of the well-oiled quality of the Republican media operation, because of the efficiency and prolixity of his efforts to disseminate the Party’s message. If bloggers can respond to political developments within seconds, it must be O.K. for me to speed up the cycle of discourse just one more click and defend Hewitt in advance against this as yet unmade charge. Hewitt is definitely a Republican, but he is no mere mouthpiece. He says that he has spent a total of five minutes with Karl Rove off the air (to disagree with a possible change in the tax treatment for clerics), that he never reads the e-mails that endlessly flow from the Republican National Committee, and that he is now involved, through an outfit called Not One Dime More, in a campaign to dissuade people from contributing to the National Republican Senatorial Committee (because some of its candidates supported the filibuster compromise). What Hewitt demonstrates about journalism is that journalism-as-politics is rapidly expanding its size and reach, especially on the conservative side. What he demonstrates about politics is not that the Republicans have a wondrously efficient message machine but that there are a lot of smart and very determined conservatives who are constantly starting new organizations and signing up more converts. And the Democrats aren’t going to beat them merely by streamlining the delivery of their message. ♦

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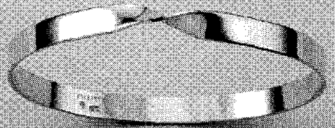

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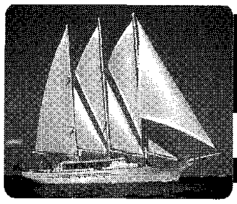

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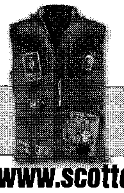

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___ Using anthrax
___ Using anthrax to powder doughnuts
X Using powdered doughnuts to make poison

Source of funds used to pay for your nuclear-weapons development:
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___ Narcotics
X "Plutonium for Rice" program
X E-mail to Americans promising twenty-four million dollars from North Korean bank if just three thousand dollars is deposited in Swiss bank account

Plans for use of nuclear power:
___ "Settle" regional disputes
X Blackmail superpowers
___ Impress chicks
___ Send those cocky Japanese back to Shogun Age

Nuclear-testing area will be disguised to appear in aerial photographs as a:
___ Hospital
___ School
___ Wal-Mart
___ Dog-in-the-Box fast-food restaurant
X "Nuclear Testing Area" (to fool C.I.A. and U.N. weapons inspectors)

Means of weapons delivery for threatening neighbors:
X Missile
___ Airplane
___ Donkey
___ Put in brown paper bag, leave on doorstep, ring bell, and run
___ F.T.D. Missilegram

Planned use for excess nuclear-development funds (if any):
___ Add wing to Magnificent Palace
X Finance "Shrek III"
X Buy more olive-drab military shirts
X Buy own sunglasses; return pairs stolen from Yoko
___ Feed millions of starving peasants

Code name for your nuclear program:
___ "Weapon of Mass Destruction"
___ "Peaceful Use of Atomic Energy"
___ "Gigli"
X "Nucular Bomb"
___ "The Depopulator"

References in support of your Nuclear Club membership:
Castro, Fidel
Evil, Dr.
Coyote, Wile E.

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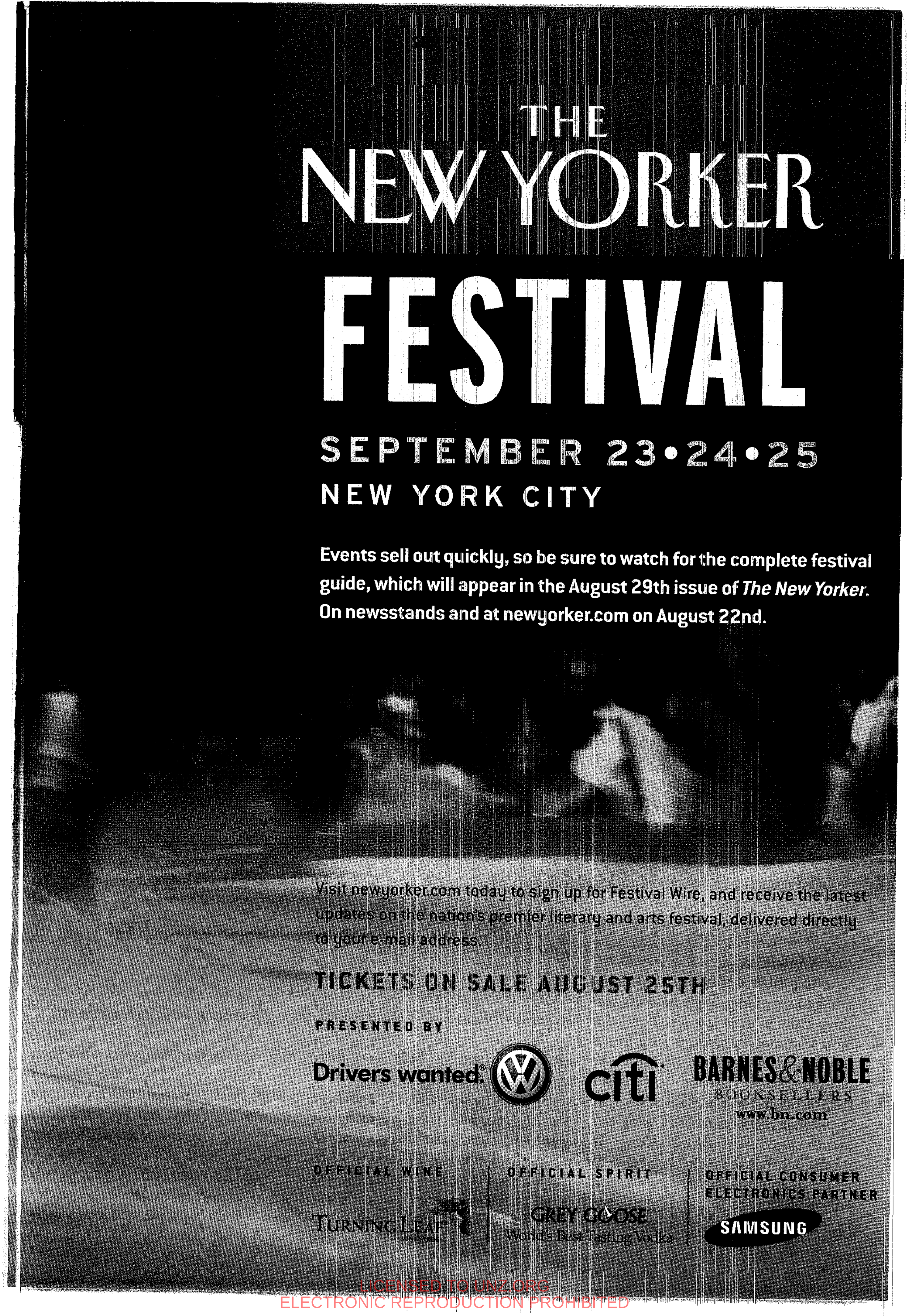

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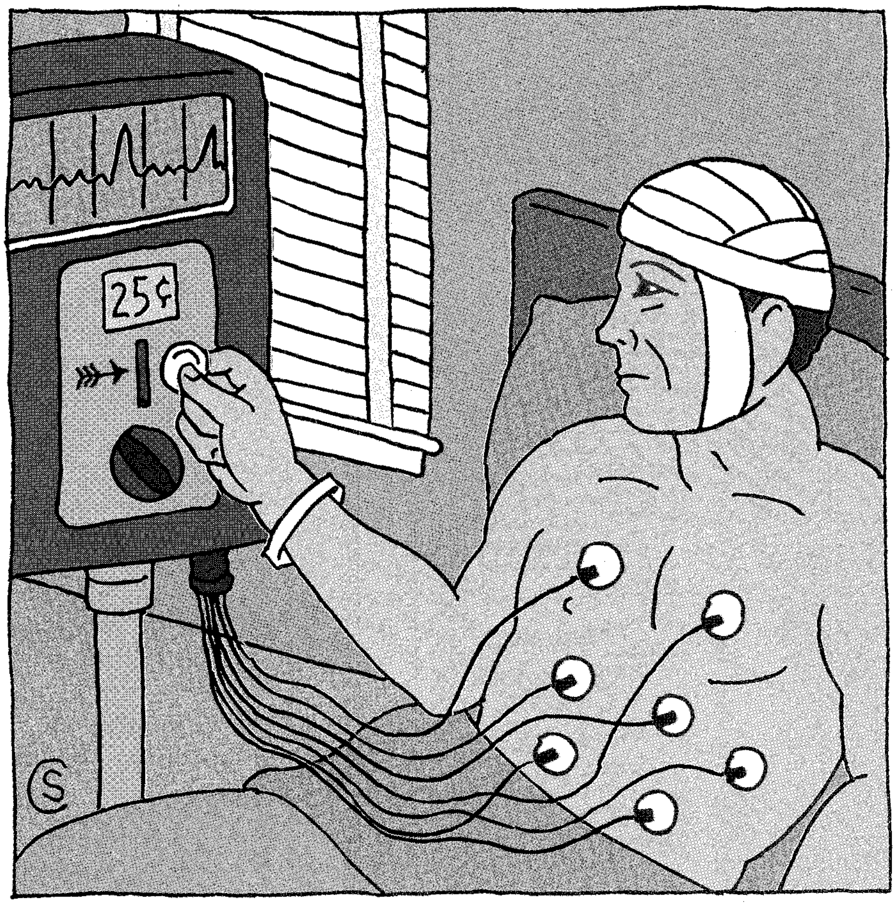
THE MORAL-HAZARD MYTH

The bad idea behind our failed health-care system.

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

Tooth decay begins, typically, when debris becomes trapped between the teeth and along the ridges and in the grooves of the molars. The food rots. It becomes colonized with bacteria. The bacteria feeds off sugars in the mouth and forms an acid that begins to eat away at the enamel of the teeth. Slowly, the bacteria works its way through to the dentin, the inner structure, and from there the cavity begins to blossom three-dimensionally, spreading inward and sideways. When the decay reaches the pulp tissue, the blood vessels, and the nerves that serve the tooth, the pain starts—an insistent throbbing. The tooth turns brown. It begins to lose its hard structure, to the point where a dentist can reach into a cavity with a hand instrument and scoop out the decay. At the base of the tooth, the bacteria mineralizes into tartar, which begins to irritate the gums. They become puffy and bright red and start to recede, leaving more and more of the tooth's root exposed. When the infection works its way down to the bone, the structure holding the tooth in begins to collapse altogether.

Several years ago, two Harvard researchers, Susan Starr Sered and Rushika Fernandopulle, set out to interview people without health-care coverage for a book they were writing, "Uninsured in America." They talked to as many kinds of people as they could find, collecting stories of untreated depression and struggling single mothers and chronically injured laborers—and the most common complaint they heard was about teeth. Gina, a hairdresser in Idaho, whose husband worked as a freight manager at a chain store, had "a peculiar mannerism of keeping her mouth closed even when speaking." It turned out that she hadn't been able to afford dental care for three years, and one of her front teeth was rotting. Daniel, a construction worker, pulled out his bad teeth with pliers. Then, there was Loretta, who worked nights at a university research center in Mississippi, and was missing most of her teeth. "They'll break off after a while, and then you just grab a hold of them, and they work their way out," she explained to Sered and Fernandopulle. "It hurts so bad, because the tooth aches. Then it's a relief just to get it out of there. The hole closes up itself anyway. So it's so much better."



Policymakers want to get people to limit their use of health care, but is less really better?

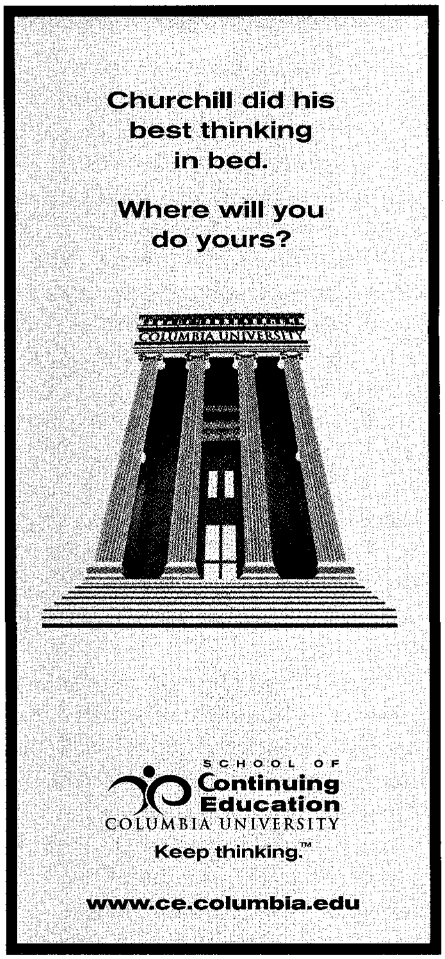
SEYMOUR CHWAST

People without health insurance have bad teeth because, if you're paying for everything out of your own pocket, going to the dentist for a checkup seems like a luxury. It isn't, of course. The loss of teeth makes eating fresh fruits and vegetables difficult, and a diet heavy in soft, processed foods exacerbates more serious health problems, like diabetes. The pain of tooth decay leads many people to use alcohol as a salve. And those struggling to get ahead in the job market quickly find that the unsightliness of bad teeth, and the self-consciousness that results, can become a major barrier. If your teeth are bad, you're not going to get a job as a receptionist, say, or a cashier. You're going to be put in the back somewhere, far from the public eye. What Loretta, Gina, and Daniel understand, the two authors tell us, is that bad teeth have come to be seen as a marker of "poor parenting, low educational achievement and slow or faulty intellectual development." They are an outward marker of caste. "Almost every time we asked interviewees what their first priority would be if the president established universal health coverage tomorrow," Sered and Fernandopulle write, "the immediate answer was 'my teeth.' "

The U. S. health-care system, according to "Uninsured in America," has created a group of people who increasingly look different from others and suffer in ways that others do not. The leading cause of personal bankruptcy in the United States is unpaid medical bills. Half of the uninsured owe money to hospitals, and a third are being pursued by collection agencies. Children without health insurance are less likely to receive medical attention for serious injuries, for recurrent ear infections, or for asthma. Lung-cancer patients without insurance are less likely to receive surgery, chemotherapy, or radiation treatment. Heart-attack victims without health insurance are less likely to receive angioplasty. People with pneumonia who don't have health insurance are less likely to receive X rays or consultations. The death rate in any given year for someone without health insurance is twenty-five per cent higher than for someone with insurance. Because the uninsured are sicker than the rest of us, they can't get better jobs, and because they can't get better jobs they can't afford health insurance, and because they can't afford health insurance they get even sicker. John, the manager of a bar in Idaho, tells Sered and Fernandopulle that as a result of various workplace injuries over the years he takes eight ibuprofen, waits two hours, then takes eight more—and tries to cadge as much prescription pain medication as he can from friends. "There are times when I should've gone to the doctor, but I couldn't afford to go because I don't have insurance," he says. "Like when my back messed up, I should've gone. If I had insurance, I would've went, because I know I could get treatment, but when you can't afford it you don't go. Because the harder the hole you get into in terms of bills, then you'll never get out. So you just say, 'I can deal with the pain.' "

One of the great mysteries of political life in the United States is why Americans are so devoted to their health-care system. Six times in the past century—during the First World War, during the Depression, during the Truman and Johnson Administrations, in the Senate in the nineteen-seventies, and during the Clinton years—efforts have been made to introduce some kind of universal health insurance, and each time the efforts have been rejected. Instead, the United States has opted for a makeshift system of increasing complexity and dysfunction. Americans spend $5,267 per capita on health care every year, almost two and half times the industrialized world's median of $2,193; the extra spending comes to hundreds of billions of dollars a year. What does that extra spending buy us? Americans have fewer doctors per capita than most Western countries. We go to the doctor less than people in other Western countries. We get admitted to the hospital less frequently than people in other Western countries. We are less satisfied with our health care than our counterparts in other countries. American life expectancy is lower than the Western average. Childhood-immunization rates in the United States are lower than average. Infant-mortality rates are in the nineteenth percentile of industrialized nations. Doctors here perform more high-end medical procedures, such as coronary angioplasties, than in other countries, but most of the wealthier Western countries have more CT scanners than the United States does, and Switzerland, Japan, Austria, and Finland all have more MRI machines per capita. Nor is our system more efficient. The United States spends more than a thousand dollars per capita per year—or close to four hundred billion dollars—on health-care-related paperwork and administration, whereas Canada, for example, spends only about three hundred dollars per capita. And, of course, every other country in the industrialized world insures all its citizens; despite those extra hundreds of billions of dollars we spend each year, we leave forty-five million people without any insurance. A country that displays an almost ruthless commitment to efficiency and performance in every aspect of its economy—a country that switched to Japanese cars the moment they were more reliable, and to Chinese T-shirts the moment they were five cents cheaper—has loyally stuck with a health-care system that leaves its citizenry pulling out their teeth with pliers.

America's health-care mess is, in part, simply an accident of history. The fact that there have been six attempts at universal health coverage in the last century suggests that there has long been support for the idea. But politics has always got in the way. In both Europe and the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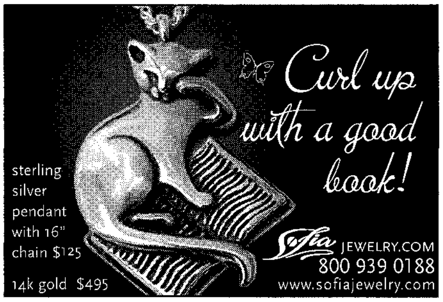
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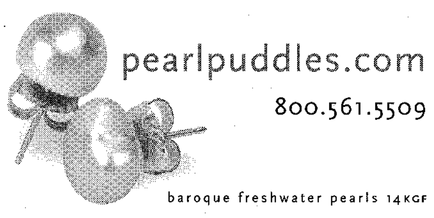
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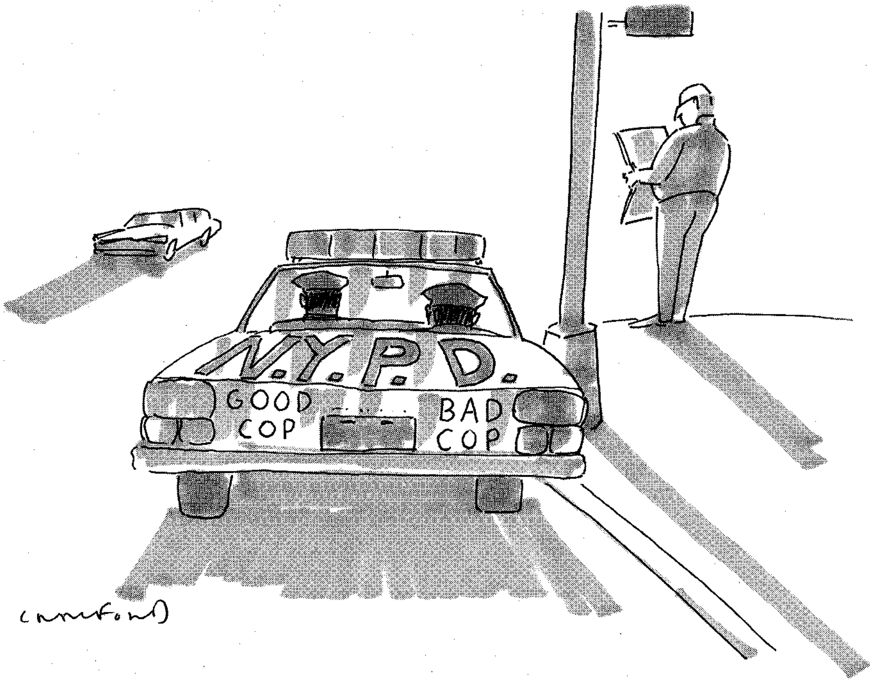
United States, for example, the push for health insurance was led, in large part, by organized labor. But in Europe the unions worked through the political system, fighting for coverage for all citizens. From the start, health insurance in Europe was public and universal, and that created powerful political support for any attempt to expand benefits. In the United States, by contrast, the unions worked through the collective-bargaining system and, as a result, could win health benefits only for their own members. Health insurance here has always been private and selective, and every attempt to expand benefits has resulted in a paralyzing political battle over who would be added to insurance rolls and who ought to pay for those additions.

Policy is driven by more than politics, however. It is equally driven by ideas, and in the past few decades a particular idea has taken hold among prominent American economists which has also been a powerful impediment to the expansion of health insurance. The idea is known as "moral hazard." Health economists in other Western nations do not share this obsession. Nor do most Americans. But moral hazard has profoundly shaped the way think tanks formulate policy and the way experts argue and the way health insurers structure their plans and the way legislation and regulations have been written. The health-care mess isn't merely the unintentional result of political dysfunction, in other words. It is also the deliberate consequence of the way in which American policymakers have come to think about insurance.

"Moral hazard" is the term economists use to describe the fact that insurance can change the behavior of the person being insured. If your office gives you and your co-workers all the free Pepsi you want—if your employer, in effect, offers universal Pepsi insurance—you'll drink more Pepsi than you would have otherwise. If you have a no-deductible fire-insurance policy, you may be a little less diligent in clearing the brush away from your house. The savings-and-loan crisis of the nineteen-eighties was created, in large part, by the fact that the federal government insured savings deposits of up to a hundred thousand dollars, and so the newly deregulated S. & L.s made far riskier investments than they would have otherwise. Insurance can have the paradoxical effect of producing risky and wasteful behavior. Economists spend a great deal of time thinking about such moral hazard for good reason. Insurance is an attempt to make human life safer and more secure. But, if those efforts can backfire and produce riskier behavior, providing insurance becomes a much more complicated and problematic endeavor.

In 1968, the economist Mark Pauly argued that moral hazard played an enormous role in medicine, and, as John Nyman writes in his book "The Theory of the Demand for Health Insurance," Pauly's paper has become the "single most influential article in the health economics literature." Nyman, an economist at the University of Minnesota, says that the fear of moral hazard lies behind the thicket of co-payments and deductibles and utilization reviews which characterizes the American health-insurance system. Fear of moral hazard, Nyman writes, also explains "the general lack of enthusiasm by U.S. health economists for the expansion of health insurance coverage (for example, national health insurance or expanded Medicare benefits) in the U.S."



What Nyman is saying is that when your insurance company requires that you make a twenty-dollar co-payment for a visit to the doctor, or when your plan includes an annual five-hundred-dollar or thousand-dollar deductible, it's not simply an attempt to get you to pick up a larger share of your health costs. It is an attempt to make your use of the health-care system more efficient. Making you responsible for a share of the costs, the argument runs, will reduce moral hazard: you'll no longer grab one of those free Pepsis when you aren't really thirsty. That's also why Nyman says that the notion of moral hazard is behind the "lack of enthusiasm" for expansion of health insurance. If you think of insurance as producing wasteful consumption of medical services, then the fact that there are forty-five million Americans without health insurance is no longer an immediate cause for alarm. After all, it's not as if the uninsured *never* go to the doctor. They spend, on average, $934 a year on medical care. A moral-hazard theorist would say that they go to the doctor when they really have to. Those of us with private insurance, by contrast, consume $2,347 worth of health care a year. If a lot of that extra $1,413 is waste, then maybe the uninsured person is the truly efficient consumer of health care.

The moral-hazard argument makes sense, however, only if we consume health care in the same way that we consume other consumer goods, and to economists like Nyman this assumption is plainly absurd. We go to the doctor grudgingly, only because we're sick. "Moral hazard is overblown," the

Princeton economist Uwe Reinhardt says. "You always hear that the demand for health care is unlimited. This is just not true. People who are very well insured, who are very rich, do you see them check into the hospital because it's free? Do people really like to go to the doctor? Do they check into the hospital instead of playing golf?"

For that matter, when you have to pay for your own health care, does your consumption really become more efficient? In the late nineteen-seventies, the RAND Corporation did an extensive study on the question, randomly assigning families to health plans with co-payment levels at zero per cent, twenty-five per cent, fifty per cent, or ninety-five per cent, up to six thousand dollars. As you might expect, the more that people were asked to chip in for their health care the less care they used. The problem was that they cut back equally on both frivolous care and useful care. Poor people in the high-deductible group with hypertension, for instance, didn't do nearly as good a job of controlling their blood pressure as those in other groups, resulting in a ten-per-cent increase in the likelihood of death. As a recent Commonwealth Fund study concluded, cost sharing is "a blunt instrument." Of course it is: how should the average consumer be expected to know beforehand what care is frivolous and what care is useful? I just went to the dermatologist to get moles checked for skin cancer. If I had had to pay a hundred per cent, or even fifty per cent, of the cost of the visit, I might not have gone. Would that have been a wise decision? I have no idea. But if one of those moles really is cancerous, that simple, inexpensive visit could save the health-care system tens of thousands of dollars (not to mention saving me a great deal of heartbreak). The focus on moral hazard suggests that the changes we make in our behavior when we have insurance are nearly always wasteful. Yet, when it comes to health care, many of the things we do only because we have insurance—like getting our moles checked, or getting our teeth cleaned regularly, or getting a mammogram or engaging in other routine preventive care—are anything but wasteful and inefficient. In fact, they are behaviors that could end up saving the health-care system a good deal of money.

Sered and Fernandopulle tell the story of Steve, a factory worker from northern Idaho, with a "grotesque-looking left hand—what looks like a bone sticks out the side." When he was younger, he broke his hand. "The doctor wanted to operate on it," he recalls. "And because I didn't have insurance, well, I was like 'I ain't gonna have it operated on.' The doctor said, 'Well, I can wrap it for you with an Ace bandage.' I said, 'Ahh, let's do that, then.' " Steve uses less health care than he would if he had insurance, but that's not because he has defeated the scourge of moral hazard. It's because instead of getting a broken bone fixed he put a bandage on it.

At the center of the Bush Administration's plan to address the health-insurance mess are Health Savings Accounts, and Health Savings Accounts are exactly what you would come up with if you were concerned, above all else, with minimizing moral hazard. The logic behind them was laid out in the 2004 Economic Report of the President. Americans, the report argues, have too much health insurance: typical plans cover things that they shouldn't, creating the problem of overconsumption. Several paragraphs are then devoted to explaining the theory of moral hazard. The report turns to the subject of the uninsured, concluding that they fall into several groups. Some are foreigners who may be covered by their countries of origin. Some are people who could be covered by Medicaid but aren't or aren't admitting that they are. Finally, a large number "remain uninsured as a matter of choice." The report continues, "Researchers believe that as many as one-quarter of those without health insurance had coverage available through an employer but declined the coverage. . . . Still others may remain uninsured because they are young and healthy and do not see the need for insurance." In other words, those with health insurance are overinsured and their behavior is distorted by moral hazard. Those without health insurance use their own money to make decisions about insurance based on an assessment of their needs. The insured are wasteful. The uninsured are prudent. So what's

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INSPIRATION POINT, BERKELEY

"If you despise this state so
why did you move here?"
I come here to remind myself
The meadows are designed
by Thomas Hart Benton
Underneath the bridge
white sharks are preying
It is a golden door to Singapore
The freighters are bringing
rare mushrooms
The mountain lions are yawning
There are walkers, cyclists, and
runners on the trails
I never knew there were so
many shades of trees
The cows and I are black
I don't even mind the radio
towers
From here
you can see everything
but the faults

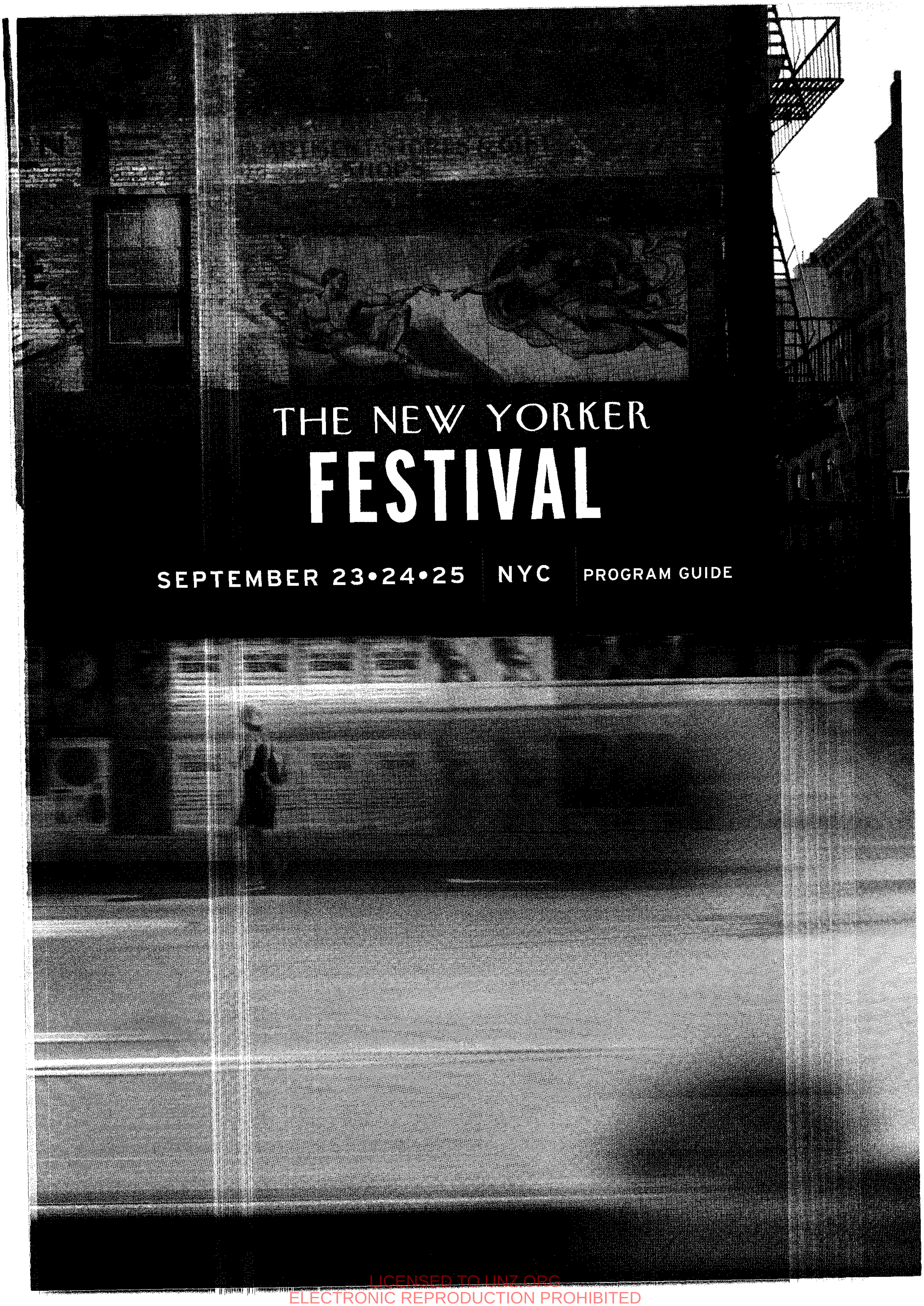
—*Ishmael Reed*

the solution? Make the insured a little bit more like the uninsured.

Under the Health Savings Accounts system, consumers are asked to pay for routine health care with their own money—several thousand dollars of which can be put into a tax-free account. To handle their catastrophic expenses, they then purchase a basic health-insurance package with, say, a thousand-dollar annual deductible. As President Bush explained recently, "Health Savings Accounts all aim at empowering people to make decisions for themselves, owning their own health-care plan, and at the same time bringing some demand control into the cost of health care."

The country described in the President's report is a very different place from the country described in "Uninsured in America." Sered and Fernandopulle look at the billions we spend on medical care and wonder why Americans have so little insurance. The President's report considers the same situation and worries that we have too much. Sered and Fernandopulle see the lack of insurance as a problem of poverty; a third of the uninsured, after all, have incomes below the federal poverty line. In the section on the uninsured in the President's report, the word "poverty" is never used. In the Administration's view, people are offered insurance but "decline the coverage" as "a matter of choice." The uninsured in Sered and Fernandopulle's book decline coverage, but only because they can't afford it. Gina, for instance, works for a beauty salon that offers her a bare-bones health-insurance plan with a thousand-dollar deductible for two hundred dollars a month. What's her total income? Nine hundred dollars a month. She could "choose" to accept health insurance, but only if she chose to stop buying food or paying the rent.

The biggest difference between the two accounts, though, has to do with how each views the function of insurance. Gina, Steve, and Loretta are ill, and need insurance to cover the costs of getting better. In their eyes, insurance is meant to help equalize financial risk between the healthy and the sick. In the insurance business, this model of coverage is known as "social insurance," and historically it was the way health coverage was conceived. If you were sixty and



THE NEW YORKER FESTIVAL

SEPTEMBER 23•24•25 | NYC | PROGRAM GUIDE

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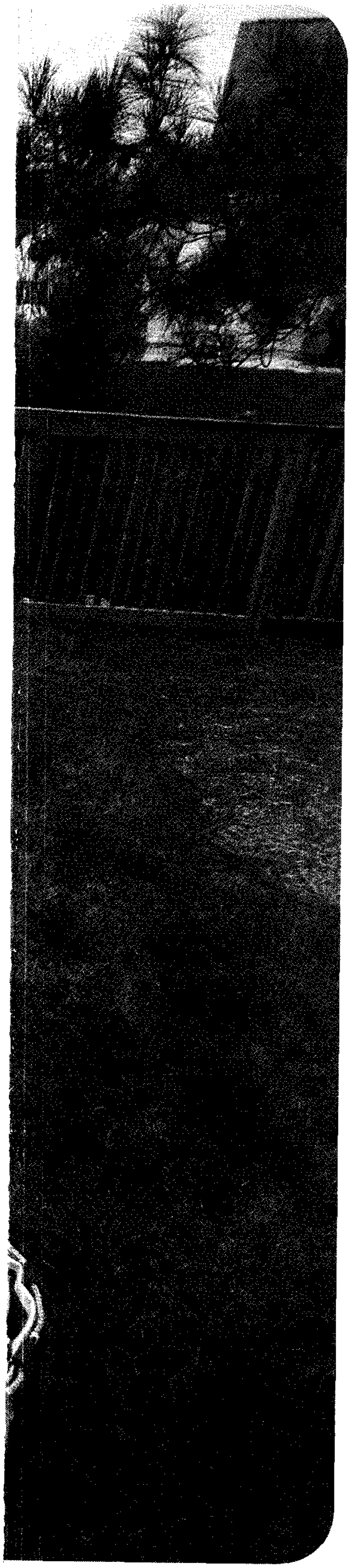

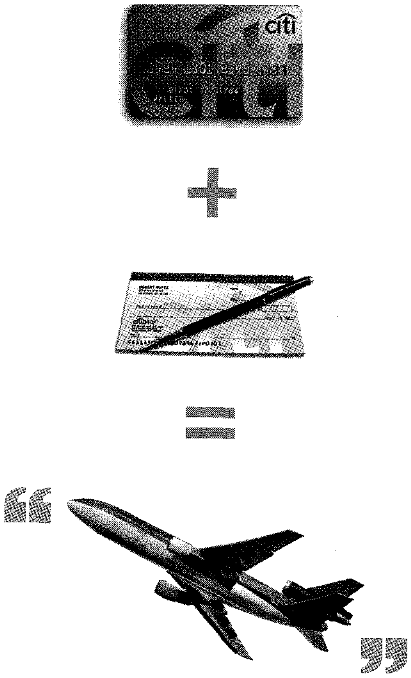

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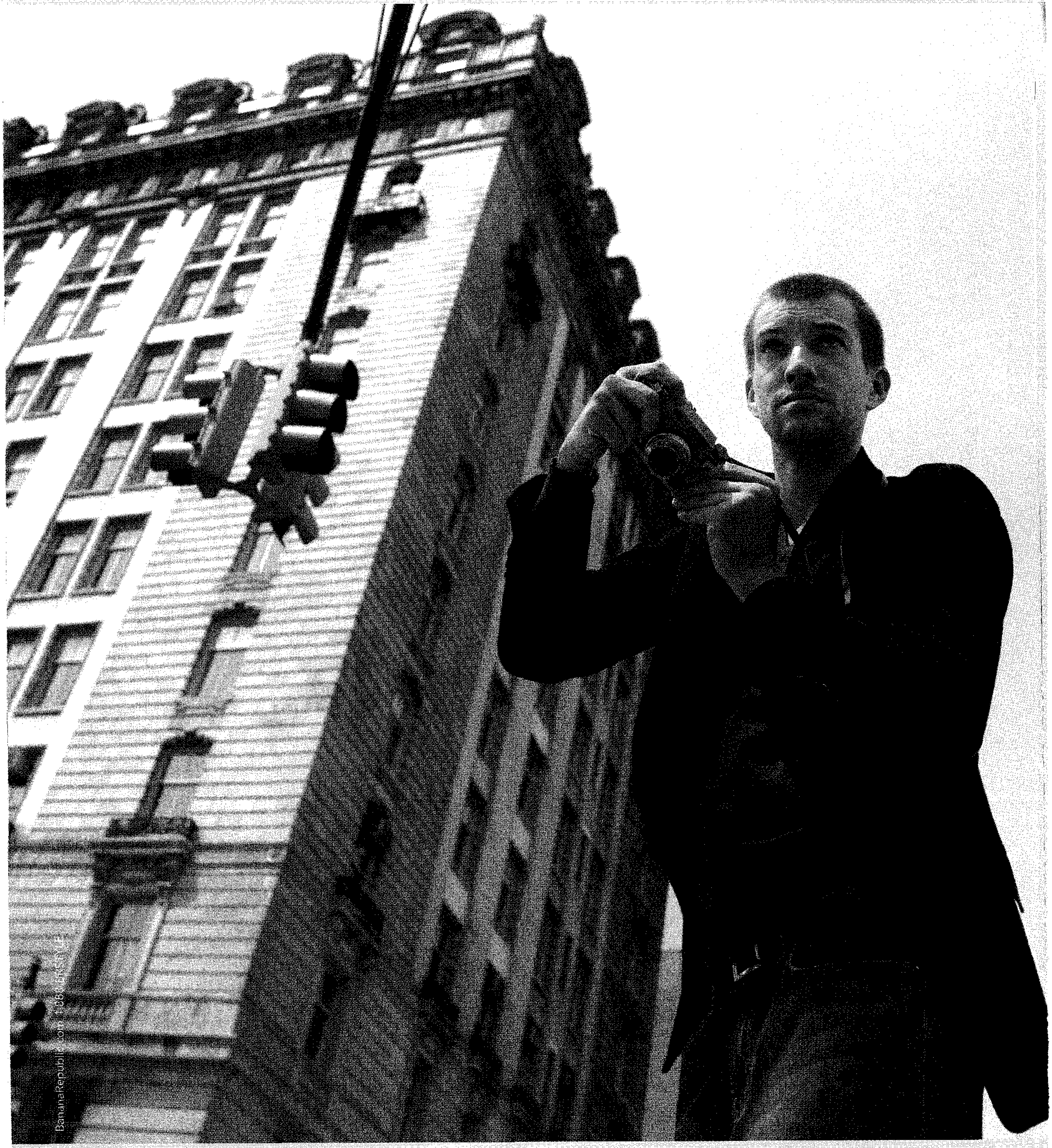
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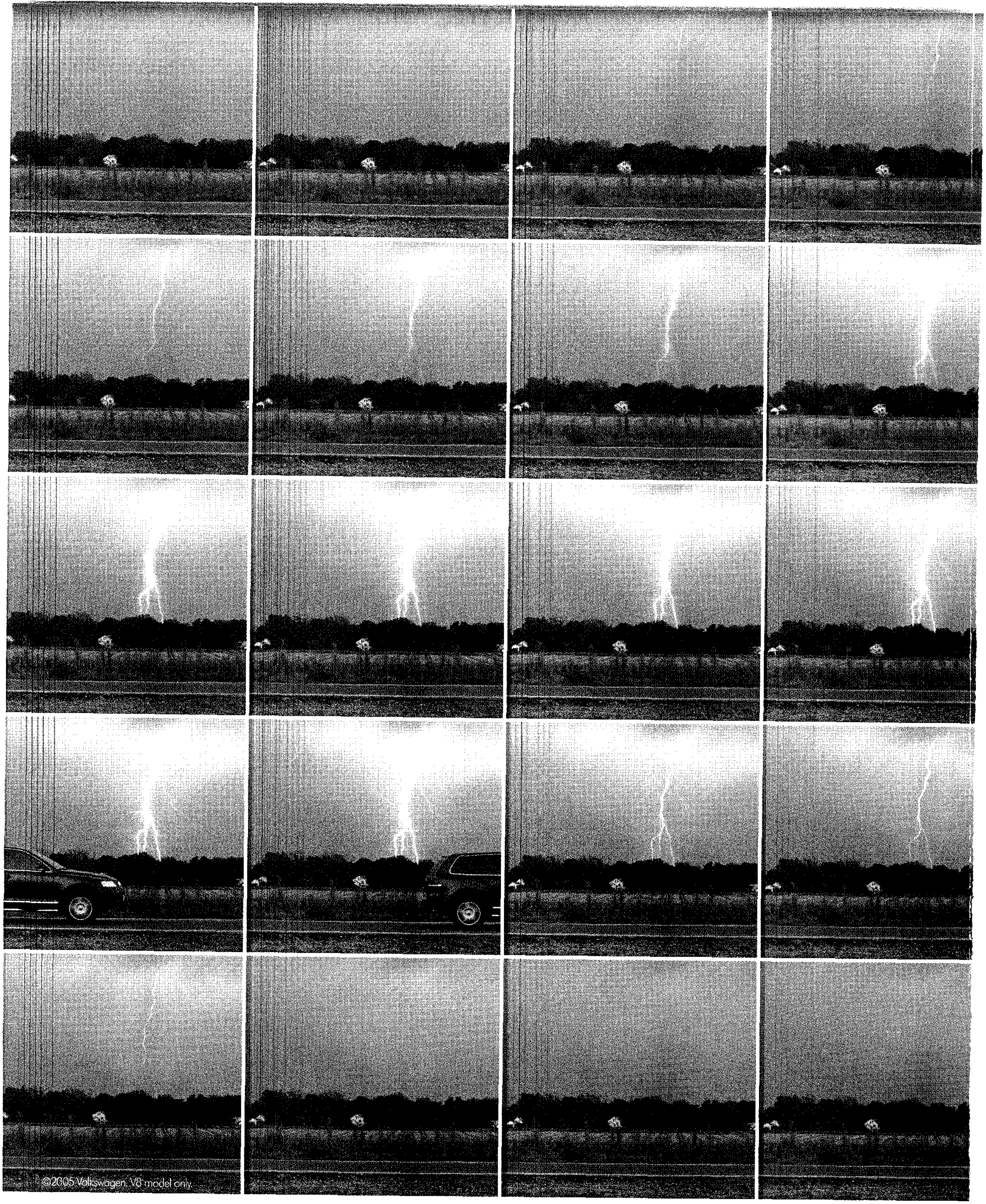
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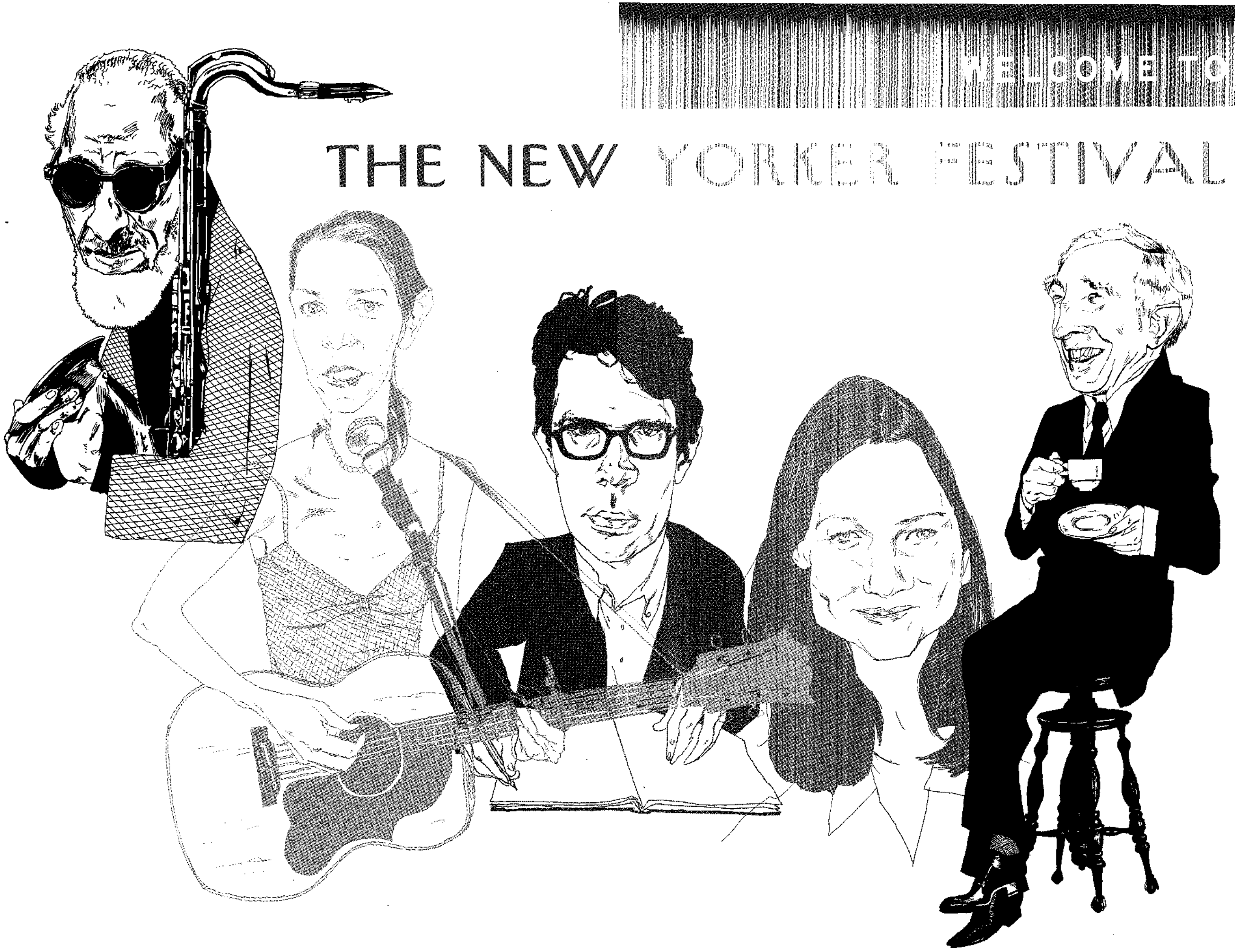
THE NEW YORKER FESTIVAL



Illustrations by Andy Friedman

The New Yorker Festival returns for its sixth year, from September 23rd through September 25th, in a celebratory weekend of public discourse on arts and ideas. The three-day schedule of events encompasses readings, musical performances, interviews, debates, and excursions around New York City.

Reflecting the eclecticism of *The New Yorker* itself, this year's Festival presents both a former director of the C.I.A. and a hash slinger from the Las Vegas Strip; the president of the Christian Coalition of America and the creators of the TV series "South Park"; a tribute to the poet W. H. Auden and a salute to the Three Stooges.

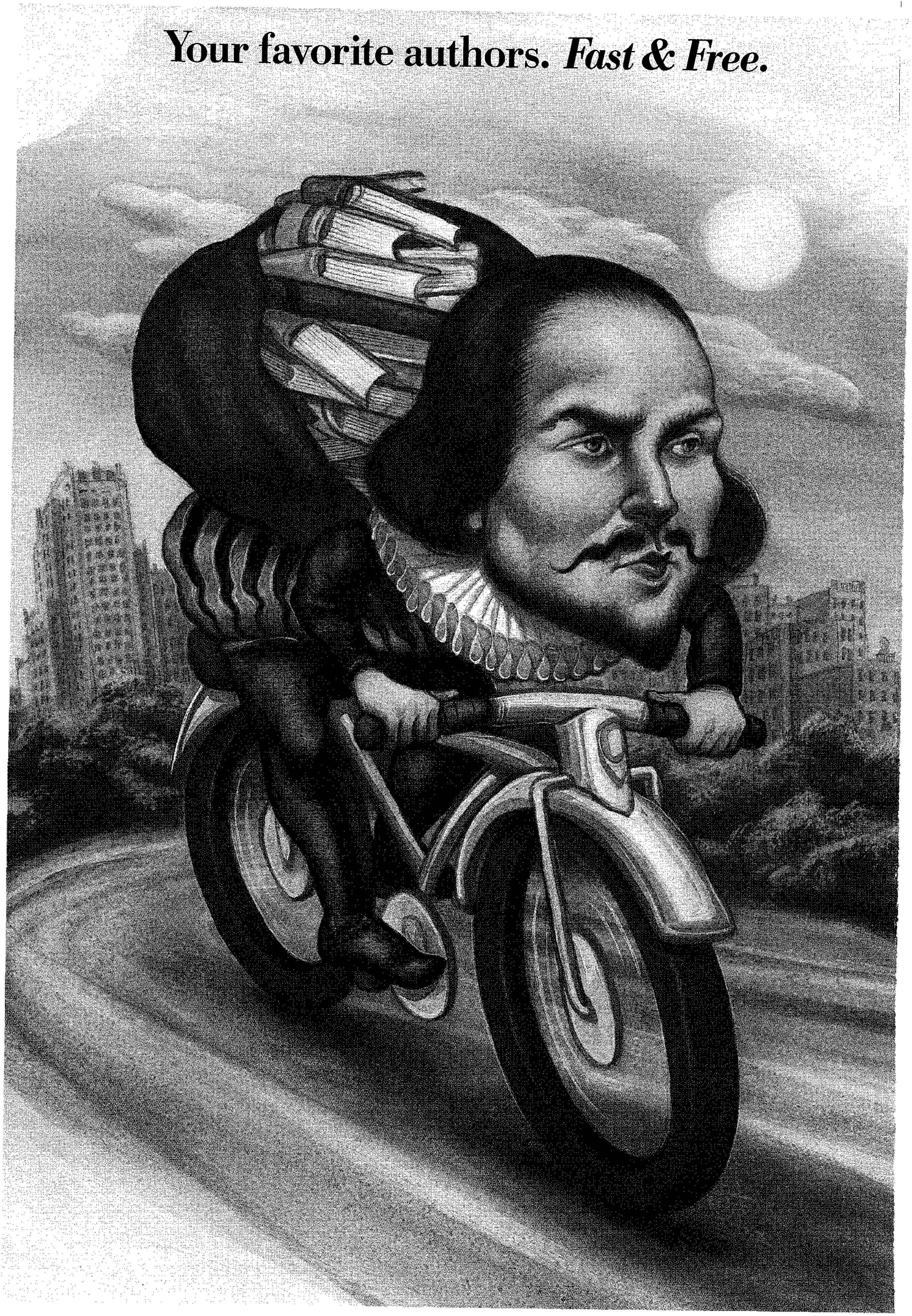
The Festival begins on Friday with Fiction Night, a gathering of writers whose stories have been published in the magazine. In paired readings, literary luminaries of the past quarter-century share the podium with a new generation of talented writers. Friday also features the inaugural New Yorker Town Hall Meeting, which this year focusses on the situation in Iraq, along with a steak-house dinner with four poker champions.

Saturday offers conversations with distinguished figures in the arts, sciences, and government, such as the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins, the dancer and choreographer Mikhail Baryshnikov, and New York City Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly. Various panels consider an array of subjects, including the role of the journalist as advocate; the ever more porous barrier between religion and politics; and the tradition of anarchy in animation. In the evening, noted musicians, actors, and filmmakers talk about their craft, with live performances by, among others, Tracy Chapman, Gillian Welch, the Roots, Earl Scruggs, Sleater-Kinney, and Rufus Wainwright.

Sunday, the final day of the Festival, offers a roster of master classes and events about town. We invite you to explore Chinatown with Calvin Trillin and feast on dim sum; treat the family to an advance screening of the first feature-length Wallace and Gromit movie; and settle in for a screening of the classic noir "The Third Man," with commentary by the *New Yorker* film critic David Denby. The Festival concludes with a Humor Revue, an afternoon of readings by some of the magazine's finest comic voices.

We look forward to seeing you at the Festival this year. For details, please read on.

ALL PROGRAMMING IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.NEWYORKER.COM.
TICKETS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT TICKETMASTER.COM, AT ALL ticketmaster OUTLETS, OR BY PHONE: CALL 1-877-391-0545.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SEPTEMBER 23, 2005

An evening of paired readings by writers whose stories have appeared in The New Yorker; conversation and a steak-house dinner with four champion high-stakes poker players; and the inaugural New Yorker Town Hall Meeting, on the future of Iraq. Tickets to the Fiction Night readings are $15. Tickets to the High Rollers Steak Dinner are $200. Tickets to The New Yorker Town Hall Meeting are $15.

FICTION NIGHT

Mohammed Naseehu Ali and Jhumpa Lahiri

Mohammed Naseehu Ali, a native of Ghana, came to the United States when he was sixteen. His début story collection, "The Prophet of Zongo Street," was published in August, and includes his *New Yorker* story "Mallam Sile," which appeared in the April 11th issue. A musician as well as a writer, he plays the djembe and the talking drum.

Jhumpa Lahiri won a Pulitzer Prize for her début story collection, "Interpreter of Maladies," which includes three stories that were published in *The New Yorker*. Her first novel, "The Namesake," parts of which originally appeared in the magazine, has been made into a feature film by the director Mira Nair. It is slated for release next year.

7 P.M. Angel Orensanz Foundation

172 Norfolk Street

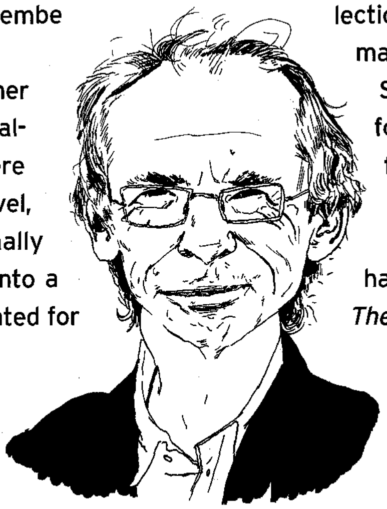
David Bezmozgis and T. Coraghessan Boyle

David Bezmozgis was born in Latvia in 1973 and emigrated to Canada in 1980. His début story collection, "Natasha and Other Stories," which includes his *New Yorker* story "Tapka," was published last year. His most recent story for the magazine, "The Russian Riviera," appeared in the May 30th issue. He is currently at work on a novel and on a feature film.

T. Coraghessan Boyle's many books include the novels "The Road to Wellville," "World's End," and "Drop City." His new story collections, "The Human Fly and Other Stories" and "Tooth and Claw," whose title story appeared in *The New Yorker* and was selected for "The Best American Short Stories 2004," are out this fall. He has been a contributor to the magazine since 1993.

7 P.M. Newspace

530 West 21st Street


Ian McEwan

Michael Chabon and Stephen King

Michael Chabon's books include the novels "Wonder Boys" and "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay," which won a Pulitzer Prize. Part of that book was originally published in *The New Yorker*. He is at work on a novel, "The Yiddish Policemen's Union," and a story collection. He has been contributing to the magazine since 1987.

Stephen King has written more than forty books since the publication of his first novel, "Carrie," in 1974. In October, the Hard Case Crime imprint will issue a new novel, "The Colorado Kid." He has contributed fiction and fact pieces to *The New Yorker* for fifteen years; several of his stories for the magazine are included in his most recent collection, "Everything's Eventual."

7 P.M. Directors Guild of America

110 West 57th Street

Edwidge Danticat and E. L. Doctorow

Edwidge Danticat grew up in Haiti and emigrated to the United States at the age of twelve. Her books include the story collection "Krik? Krak!" and the novels "The Farming of Bones" and "The Dew Breaker," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. Her most recent story for the magazine, "Reading Lessons," ran in the January 10th issue.

E. L. Doctorow has been contributing to *The New Yorker* for the past two decades. He is the author of the award-winning novels "Ragtime," "World's Fair," and "Billy Bathgate" and of the collection "Sweet Land Stories," which includes several stories that first ran in the magazine. His latest novel, "The March," is out in September.

7 P.M. Anthology Film Archives

32 Second Avenue

Chang-rae Lee and Lorrie Moore

Chang-rae Lee's début novel, "Native Speaker," won the Hemingway Foundation / PEN Award; parts of both of his last two novels, "A Gesture Life" and "Aloft," were first published in *The New Yorker*. He has contributed both fiction and fact pieces to the magazine for the past decade. He was born in South Korea and emigrated to the United States at the age of three.

Lorrie Moore has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1989. Her books include the novels "Who Will Run the Frog Hospital?" and "Anagrams" and the story collections "Self-Help," "Like Life," and "Birds of America." She has taught at the University of Wisconsin at Madison since 1984. Her most recent story for the magazine, "The Juniper Tree," appeared in the January 17th issue.

7 P.M. Satalla
37 West 26th Street

A. M. Homes and Jeffrey Eugenides

A. M. Homes is the author of two story collections, a travel memoir, and four novels, including "The End of Alice" and "Music for Torching," parts of which first ran in *The New Yorker*. Her most recent *New Yorker* piece, "The Mistress's Daughter," appeared in the 2004 Winter Fiction Issue. Her novel "This Book Will Save Your Life" will be published next April.

Jeffrey Eugenides is the author of two novels: "The Virgin Suicides," which was made into a feature film directed by Sofia Coppola, and the Pulitzer Prize-winning "Middlesex," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. He is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship and a Whiting Writers' Award, and is currently at work on a third novel.

9:30 P.M. Satalla
37 West 26th Street

Edward P. Jones and Marilynne Robinson

Edward P. Jones's first book, the story collection "Lost in the City," won the Hemingway Foundation / PEN Award. His début novel, "The Known World," was published last year and won a Pulitzer Prize and the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award. His most recent *New Yorker* story, "Adam Robinson," appeared in the 2004 Winter Fiction Issue.

Marilynne Robinson made her literary début in 1981 with the novel "Housekeeping," which received a Hemingway Foundation / PEN Award and was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize. This year, she won a Pulitzer Prize for her second novel, "Gilead," which was published last fall. Parts of the novel originally appeared in *The New Yorker*.

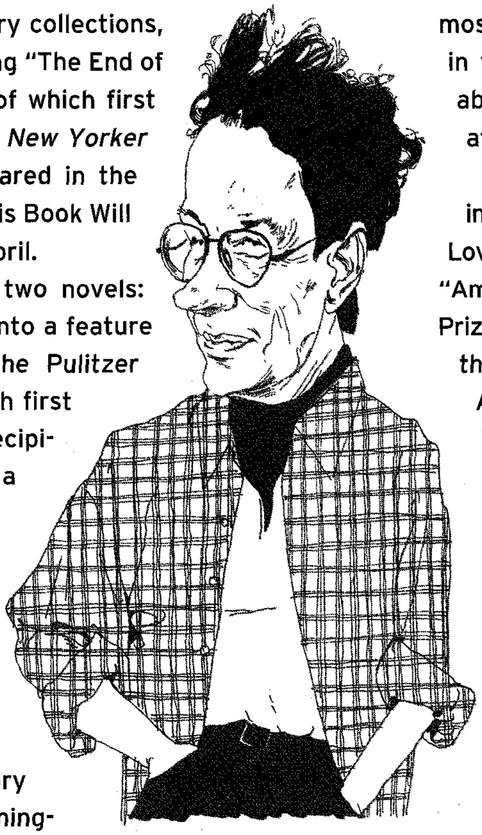
9:30 P.M. Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue

Nicole Krauss and Ian McEwan

Nicole Krauss is the author of two novels, "Man Walks Into a Room" and "The History of Love," which was published this year, and parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. In her most recent piece for the magazine, in the April 18th issue, she wrote about the trials of her experience at summer camp in Maine.

Ian McEwan's many books include the story collection "First Love, Last Rites" and the novels "Amsterdam," which won the Booker Prize, and "Atonement," which won the National Book Critics Circle Award. Parts of his novels "Enduring Love" and "Saturday," which came out in March, were originally published in *The New Yorker*.

9:30 P.M. Angel Orensanz Foundation
172 Norfolk Street



Annie Proulx

Annie Proulx and Richard Ford

Annie Proulx's books include the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel "The Shipping News" and the story collections "Bad

FICTION NIGHT

Dirt" and "Wyoming Stories." A story from that collection, "Brokeback Mountain," which first appeared in *The New Yorker*, has been made into a feature film directed by Ang Lee; it premières in December. She is at work on a memoir about building a house on what will become an avian preserve.

Richard Ford is the author of five novels, among them "The Sportswriter" and "Independence Day," which won a Pulitzer Prize. His most recent book, the story collection "A Multitude of Sins," includes several stories from *The New Yorker*. His novel "The Lay of the Land," the third in the Frank Bascombe trilogy, will be published next year.

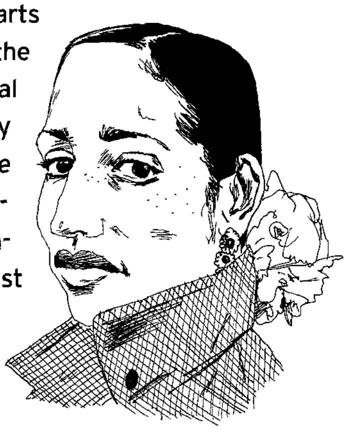
9:30 P.M. Newspace
530 West 21st Street

Zadie Smith and Jonathan Franzen

Zadie Smith is the author of the novels "White Teeth," which won the Whitbread First Novel Award, and "The Autograph Man," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. A new novel, "On Beauty," is out in September. She is currently working on a book of essays on twentieth-century fiction.

Jonathan Franzen has contributed fiction, essays, and fact pieces to *The New Yorker* for the past eleven years. He has published three novels and an essay collection; his novel "The Corrections," parts of which first appeared in the magazine, won a National Book Award. His story "Two's Company" ran in the May 23rd issue; his Reflections piece on bird-watching appeared in the August 8th & 15th issue.

9:30 P.M. Directors
Guild of America
110 West 57th Street



Zadie Smith

HIGH ROLLERS STEAK DINNER

Join four champion high-stakes poker players, **Doyle Brunson, Phil Hellmuth, Jr., Howard Lederer,** and **David Williams**, for steak and conversation with **Kevin Conley.**

Doyle Brunson won his tenth World Series of Poker bracelet this year, at the age of seventy-one. He holds two Series championship titles and is tied for most-decorated player in the tournament's history. In the nineteen-fifties and sixties, he roamed the Southwest playing illegal games and fending off bandits, before settling in Las Vegas. His 1978 book, "Super System: A Course in Power Poker," along with "Super System 2," are game classics.

Phil Hellmuth, Jr., is a nine-time winner at the World Series of Poker, and ranks fifth on the all-time prize-money list, with five million dollars. At the age of twenty-four, he became the youngest player to win the Series championship. He is the author of the best-selling "Play Poker Like the Pros" and "Bad Beats and Lucky Draws," and is at work on an autobiography, "Poker Brat."

Howard Lederer, known as the Professor, is a former chess prodigy who discovered poker in the back room of his favorite chess club. He has won two World Series of Poker bracelets and two World Poker Tour tournaments. He has provided poker commentary for Fox Sports Net and is the president of TiltWare, the developer of FullTiltPoker.com.

David Williams won more than four million dollars playing poker while he was still in college. He briefly attended Princeton before returning to his native Texas to study economics at Southern Methodist University. He finished second in the 2004 World Series of Poker championship after qualifying in an online tournament.

Kevin Conley has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2003. Previously, he was a Goings On About Town editor. He is the author of "Stud: Adventures in Breeding," parts of which first ran in the magazine, and is at work on a book about stuntmen. His article on poker, "The Players," appeared in the July 11th & 18th issue.

7 P.M. Gallagher's Steak House
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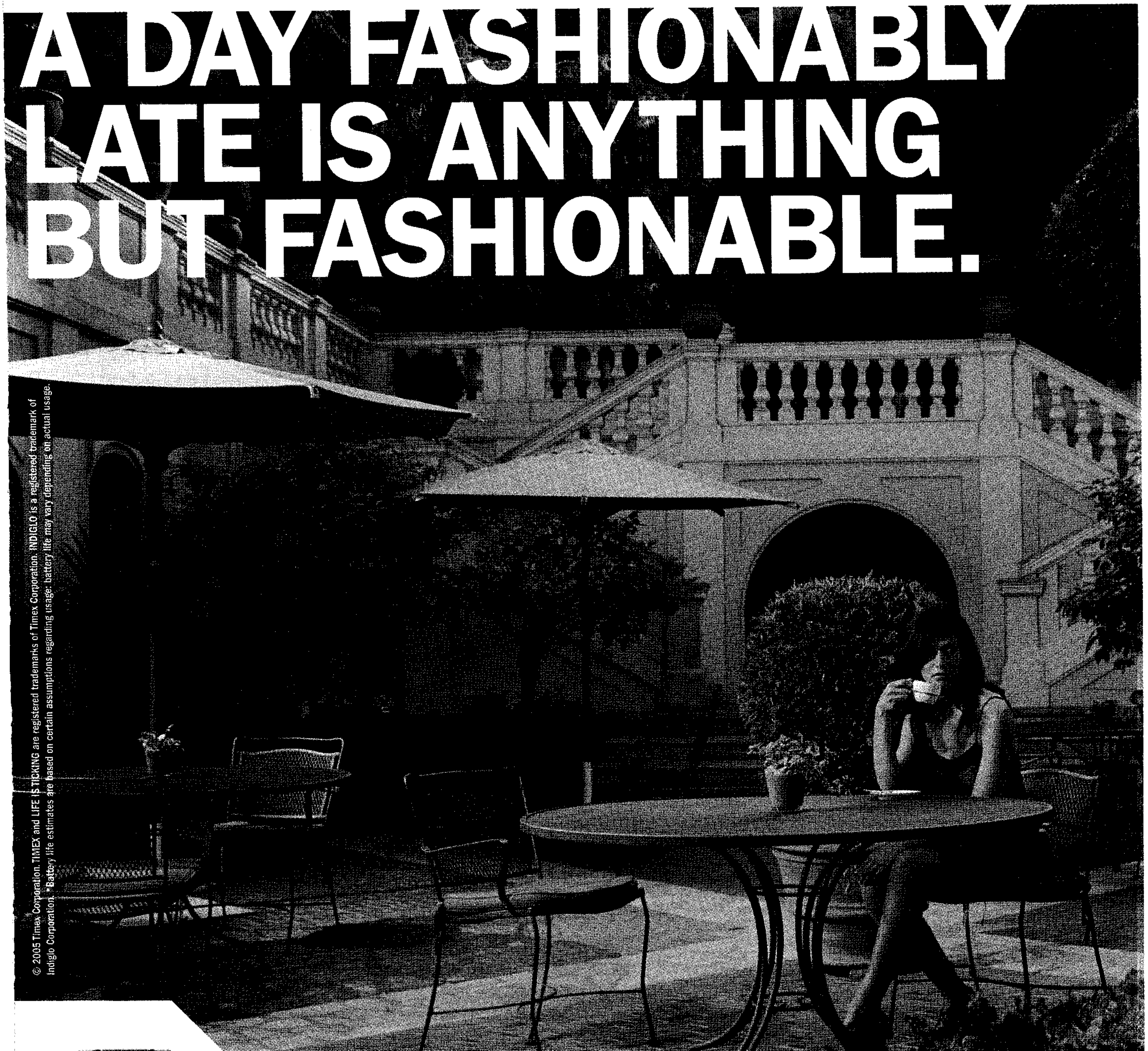
A DAY FASHIONABLY LATE IS ANYTHING BUT FASHIONABLE.

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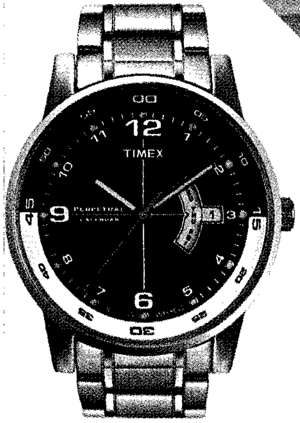
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FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2005

THE NEW YORKER **TOWN HALL MEETING ON IRAQ**

Jeffrey Goldberg, moderator. **Robert Baer**, **Mark Danner**, **Douglas J. Feith**, **Kanan Makiya**, **George Packer**, **Rend al-Rahim**, and **R. James Woolsey** discuss the struggle for Iraq's future.

Jeffrey Goldberg has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2000, and became the magazine's Washington correspondent earlier this year. Previously, he specialized in foreign reporting, with an emphasis on the Middle East, and has covered the war in Iraq from Kurdistan and northern Iraq. He is at work on a book about the Middle East.

Robert Baer was a case officer for the Central Intelligence Agency from 1976 to 1997. He served in the Middle East and played an integral role in the C.I.A.'s 1995 attempt to overthrow Saddam Hussein. His memoir, "See No Evil," was adapted for the feature film "Syriana," directed by Steven Gaghan and produced by Steven Soderbergh, which will be released this fall.

Mark Danner has been a *New Yorker* contributor since 1990. He is a professor of journalism at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Henry R. Luce Professor of Human Rights, Democracy, and Journalism at Bard College. His books include "The Road to Illegitimacy: One Reporter's Travels Through the 2000 Florida Vote Re-Count" and "Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror."

Douglas J. Feith was the Under-Secretary of Defense for Policy from 2001 until this summer, among the Pentagon's highest-ranking civilians. He supervised the Northern Gulf Affairs Office, formerly the Office of Special Plans, which helped develop U.S. Iraq policy and was instrumental in developing the government's strategy for the war on terrorism. After 9/11, he directed the Policy Counter Terrorism Evaluation Group, which reviewed intelligence on ties among terrorist groups and state sponsors.

Kanan Makiya's books include "Republic of Fear: The Politics of Modern Iraq" and "Cruelty and Silence: War, Tyranny, Uprising, and the Arab World." He collaborated on the award-winning TV documentary "Saddam's Killing Fields." In October, 1992, he acted as the convenor of the Human Rights Committee of the Iraqi opposition, based in northern Iraq. He is the director of the Iraq Research and Documentation Project at Harvard University.

George Packer has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2003. His most recent article, "The Home Front," about the father of a soldier killed in Iraq, appeared in the July 4th issue. He is the author of "The Village of Waiting," "Blood of the Liberals," and, out this fall, "The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq."

Rend al-Rahim, a native of Iraq, is the executive director of the Iraq Foundation, which she co-founded in 1991. From November, 2003, to December, 2004, she served as Iraq's Representative to the United States and the Iraqi Chief of Mission. She is the co-author of "The Arab Shi'a: The Forgotten Muslims."

R. James Woolsey has held Presidential appointments in two Democratic and two Republican Administrations. He was the director of the C.I.A. from 1993 to 1995. Previous to that, he served as Ambassador to the Negotiation on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe from 1989 to 1991 and was Under-Secretary of the Navy from 1977 to 1979. He is affiliated with the firm Booz Allen Hamilton, in Washington, D.C.

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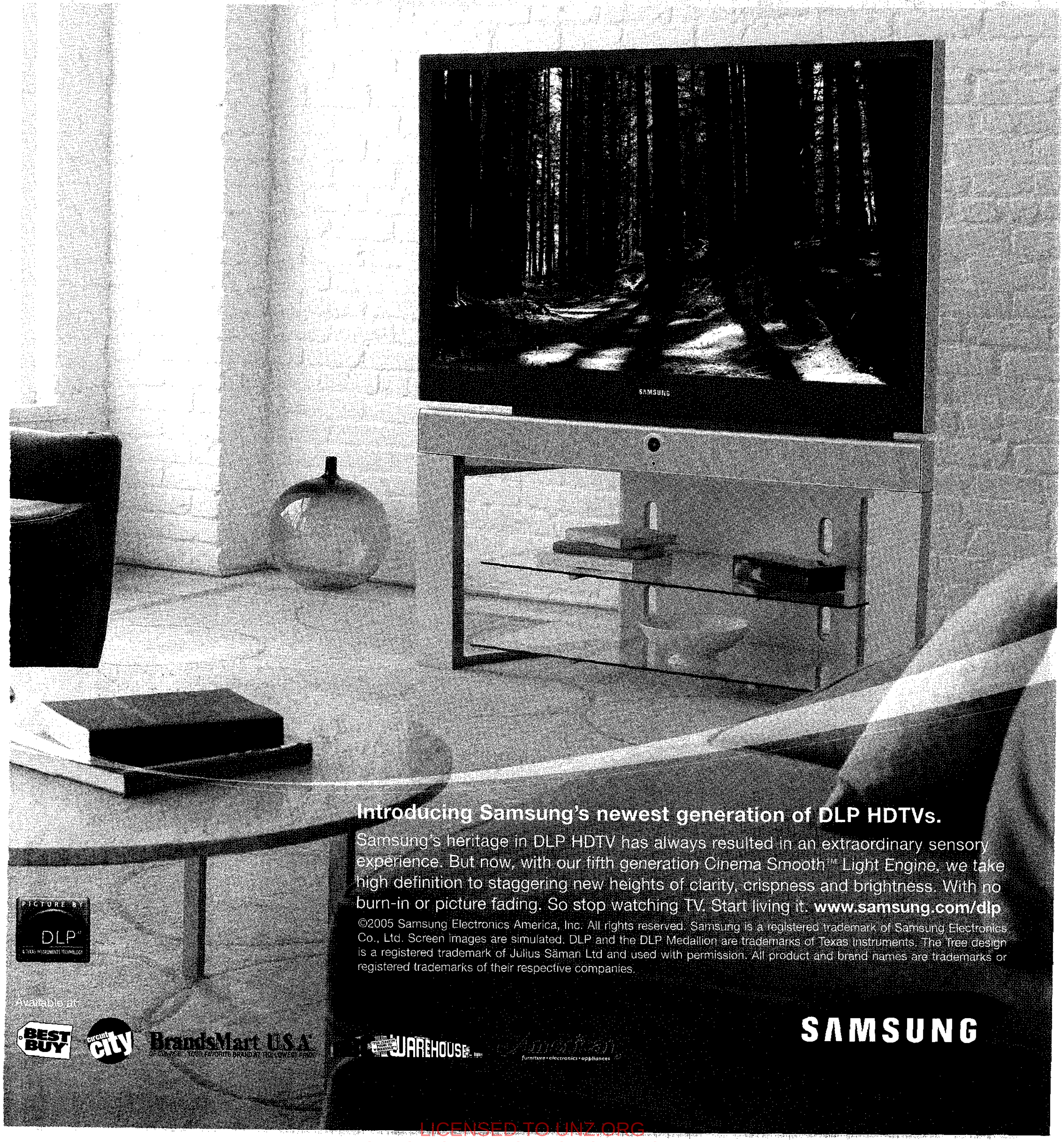

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SEPTEMBER 24, 2005

A day of talks, interviews, and panel discussions, including a tribute to the poet W. H. Auden, and Early and Late Shift evening events, many of them featuring live musical performance, throughout the city. Tickets for daytime events are $25. Tickets for Early and Late Shift events, except where noted, are $35. There will also be a hands-on demonstration of "The Complete New Yorker," our new digital archive, as well as book signings, at Festival headquarters. (See pages 38 and 39 of the guide.)

WRITERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS

Malcolm Gladwell on the American Obsession with Precociousness

Learning quickly versus learning well.

Malcolm Gladwell has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1996. He is the author of "The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference" and "Blink: The Power of Thinking Without Thinking," which was published this year. Both books grew out of articles that first appeared in the magazine. Mr. Gladwell will discuss other works in progress as well.

10 A.M. Directors Guild of America
110 West 57th Street

POLICE DEPARTMENT
1

Raymond W. Kelly

William Finnegan and Raymond W. Kelly

Defending New York City.

William Finnegan has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1987. His books include "Dateline Soweto," "A Complicated War," and "Cold New World," all of which grew out of articles for the magazine. In his July 25th *New Yorker* piece, "The Terrorism Beat," he wrote about how the N.Y.P.D., under Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, is working to prevent terrorist attacks.

Raymond W. Kelly is the Police Commissioner of New York City. He first held this post from 1992 to 1994, and was reappointed in 2002. In the interim, he commanded the multinational police force in Haiti in 1994, and served as Under-Secretary of the United States Treasury and as U.S. Customs Commissioner. He has thirty-one years of experience in the New York Police Department.

1 P.M. Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Richard Dawkins interviewed by Henry Finder

Disciple of Darwin.

Richard Dawkins holds the Charles Simonyi Chair of the Public Understanding of Science at Oxford. His books include the best-selling "The Selfish Gene," "The Blind Watchmaker," "Climbing Mount Improbable," "The Ancestor's Tale," and "A Devil's Chaplain," a collection of essays. He has received the International Cosmos Prize and the Kistler Prize.

Henry Finder is the editorial director of *The New Yorker.*

10 A.M. Ailey Studios
405 West 55th Street

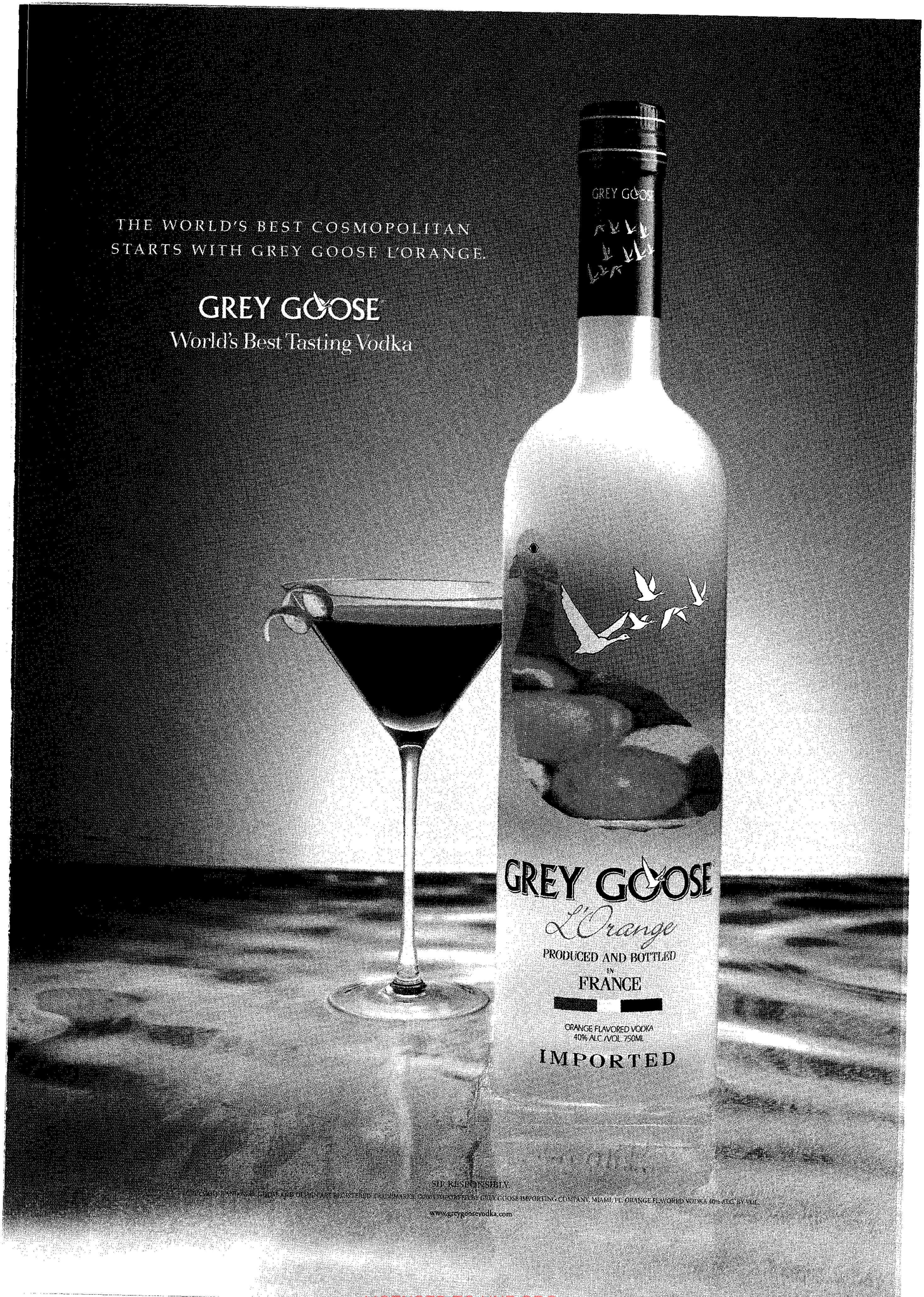
Roger Angell and Ian Frazier interviewed by Mark Singer

Writing your own life.

Roger Angell has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1944 and a fiction editor since 1956. His writings for the magazine include fiction, reportage, Comment, movie and book reviews, verse, and more than a hundred Sporting Scene pieces, mostly on baseball. He is at work on his tenth book, a memoir called "Let Me Finish." His most recent *New Yorker* piece, "Andy," about his stepfather, E. B. White, ran in the February 14th & 21st Anniversary Issue.

Ian Frazier has written essays and fact and humor pieces for *The New Yorker* for more than thirty years. He is the author of seven books, including the humor collection "Coyote v. Acme," "On the Rez," "The Fish's Eye," and the historical memoir "Family." His new book, "Gone to New York," which will be published in November, features a recent *New Yorker* essay, "Out of Ohio," from the January 10th issue.

Mark Singer has been a staff writer at *The New*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Yorker since 1974. His books include "Mr. Personality," a collection of Profiles and Talk of the Town pieces, and "Somewhere in America," a compilation of his U.S. Journal columns from the magazine. A new collection of his *New Yorker* pieces, "Character Studies," came out in July.

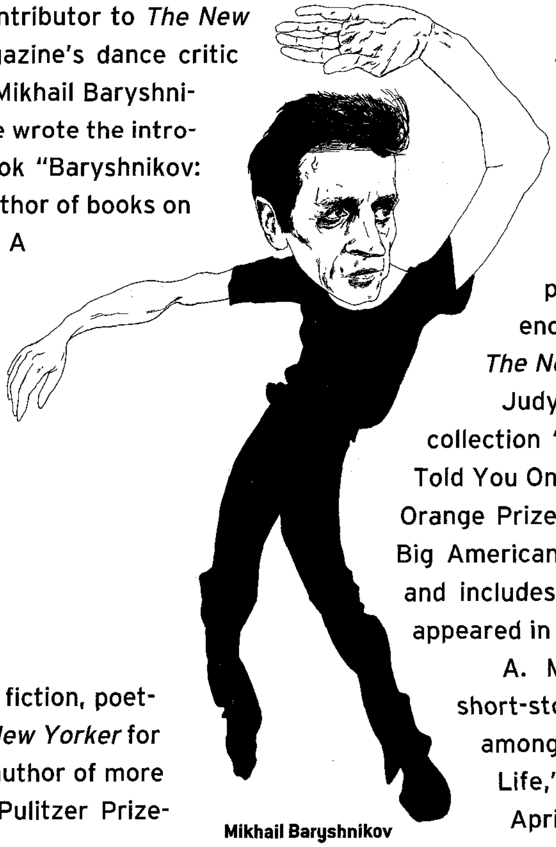
1 P.M. Ailey Studios
405 West 55th Street

Mikhail Baryshnikov interviewed by Joan Acocella

The lead dancer.

Mikhail Baryshnikov began his career as a soloist with the Kirov Ballet, in Leningrad. After leaving the Soviet Union at the age of twenty-six, he danced with ballet and modern companies around the world. He has served as artistic director of the American Ballet Theatre and as director and dancer with the White Oak Dance Project, which he co-founded with the choreographer Mark Morris. This winter marks the opening of the new Baryshnikov Arts Center, in New York City.

Joan Acocella has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1992 and the magazine's dance critic since 1998, when her Profile of Mikhail Baryshnikov, "The Soloist," appeared. She wrote the introduction for the photography book "Baryshnikov: In Black and White" and is the author of books on Mark Morris and Willa Cather. A collection of her essays, "Twenty-six Artists and a Saint," many of which were originally published in the magazine, will be out next year.



Mikhail Baryshnikov

1 P.M. 37 Arts
450 West 37th Street

John Updike interviewed by David Remnick

A life in literature.

John Updike has contributed fiction, poetry, essays, and criticism to *The New Yorker* for the past half century. He is the author of more than fifty books, including the Pulitzer Prize-winning novels "Rabbit Is Rich" and "Rabbit at Rest," and, most recently, the novel "Villages," parts of which first appeared in the magazine. His story "The Roads of Home" was published in the February 7th issue. "Still Looking," a collection of his art essays, will be published in October.

David Remnick is the editor of *The New Yorker.*

4 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum
The New York Public Library
Entrance on 42nd Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues
(Net proceeds from this event will go to the New York Public Library to support collections at the Research Libraries.)

PANELS

When Reality Fails

Fantasy and invention in fiction.

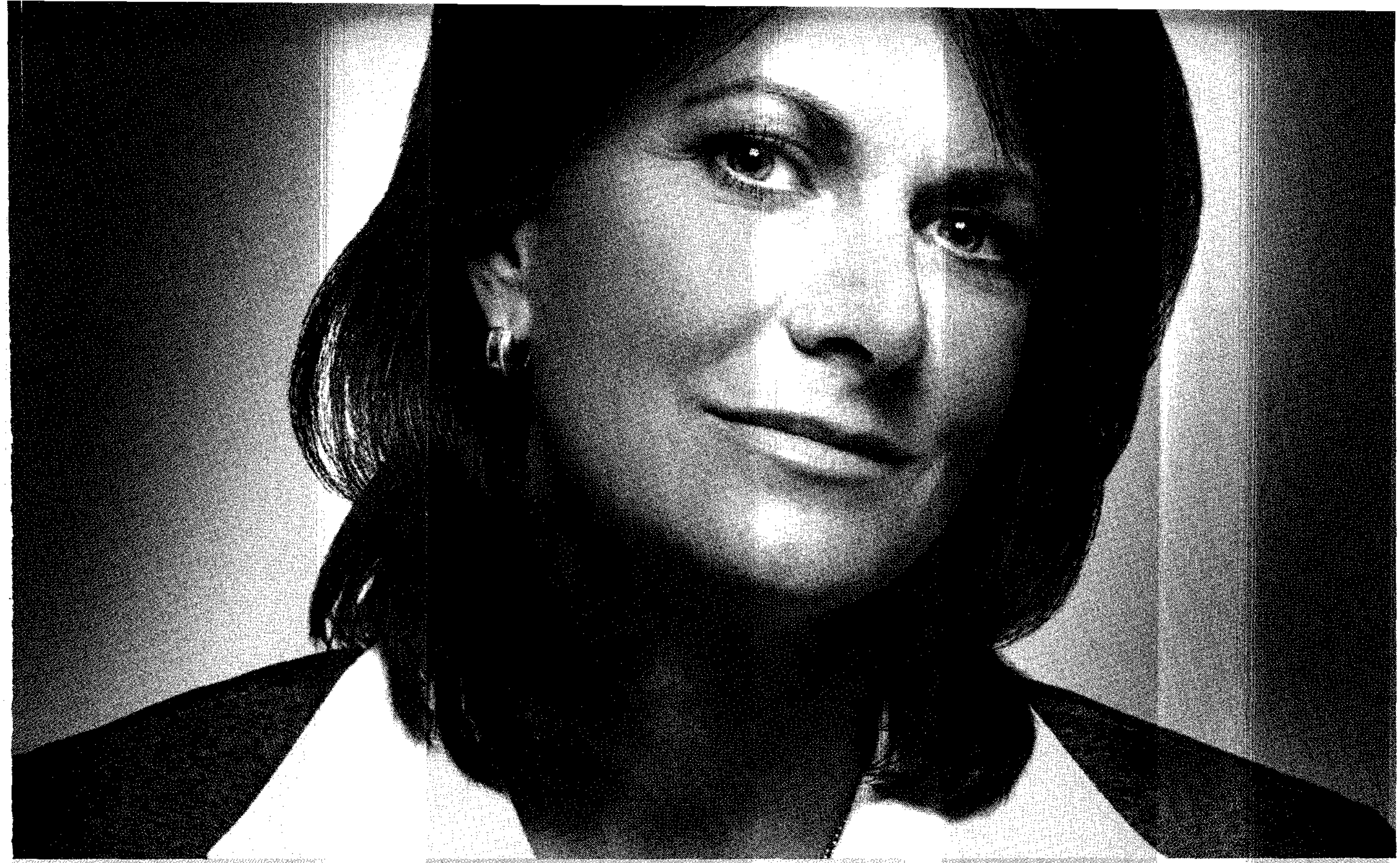
Deborah Treisman, moderator. With **Martin Amis, Judy Budnitz, A. M. Homes, Stephen King,** and **George Saunders.**

Deborah Treisman is the fiction editor of *The New Yorker.*

Martin Amis is the author of ten novels, including "Money," "London Fields," "The Information," and "Yellow Dog"; two short-story collections; and six works of nonfiction, among them "Koba the Dread," about Stalin's purges, and the memoir "Experience." He has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1992.

Judy Budnitz has written the story collection "Flying Leap" and the novel "If I Told You Once," which was shortlisted for the Orange Prize. Her new story collection, "Nice Big American Baby," was published this year and includes the story "Miracle," which first appeared in *The New Yorker.*

A. M. Homes's books include two short-story collections and four novels, among them "This Book Will Save Your Life," which will be published next April. She has been a contributor to



THE ART OF BEING GLOBAL - *Paula Polito - SVP of Marketing, Merrill Lynch Global Private Client Group*

An architect of change, Ms. Polito and her team transformed marketing for The Bull from an approach focused primarily on stocks and bonds to one of comprehensive wealth management, symbolized in the U.S. by Total Merrill.℠ Here, she offers insights *on everything from succeeding in the worldwide marketplace to the etiquette of getting into a cab in Japan.*

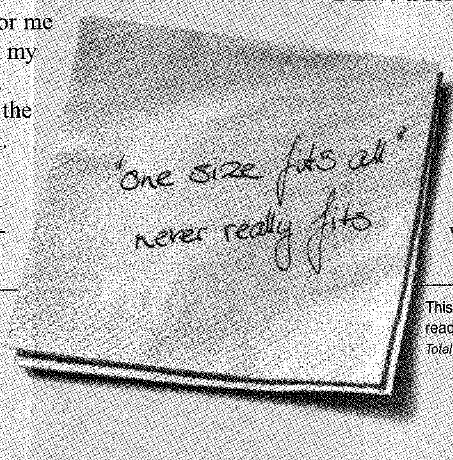
The global marketplace is open 24/7 - it makes sleep a valuable commodity. Doing business globally is more real-time than ever before. My life adjusted to the global marketplace - people in my position - we all take calls in the middle of the night. Of course, there are major benefits to this; real-time global business makes everyone more dedicated, creates strong partnerships, and equips us all to take immediate advantage of opportunities.

To open markets, you need an open mind. Cultural differences are real and offer important opportunities to learn. For instance, when I get into a cab in New York, it's automatic for me to close my own door. So imagine my surprise when I first visited Tokyo, many years ago, and I reached for the door and was immediately scolded. I realized that if a little thing like a cab door can be so different, and matter so much, other differences - far more important differences - would need to be considered.

Customization is the only 'universal' of global marketing. Customization is our global key. Not only do we have to work at customizing our brand, region by region, we also need to customize client by client; it's what makes our Financial Advisors and the advice they give unique.

It's a big world. Prioritize. For me, it's about gaining knowledge and being predictive. Where will growth come from? What can we deliver within our own business structure? It's in the combination of these questions that lies the answer.

I have a ferocious appetite for global knowledge, in the biggest and smallest senses of the word. The Financial Times helps satisfy that appetite. It covers the globe but is divided intuitively into regions. It is a useful mix of financial and geopolitical news that is sorted in a concise, logical and very insightful way. The Financial Times helps me do business the way I want to do business.



This is one in a series of reflections by leading marketers, who are also regular readers of the FT. The series can also be found at FT.com/toolkit/globalview
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A global view for a global world

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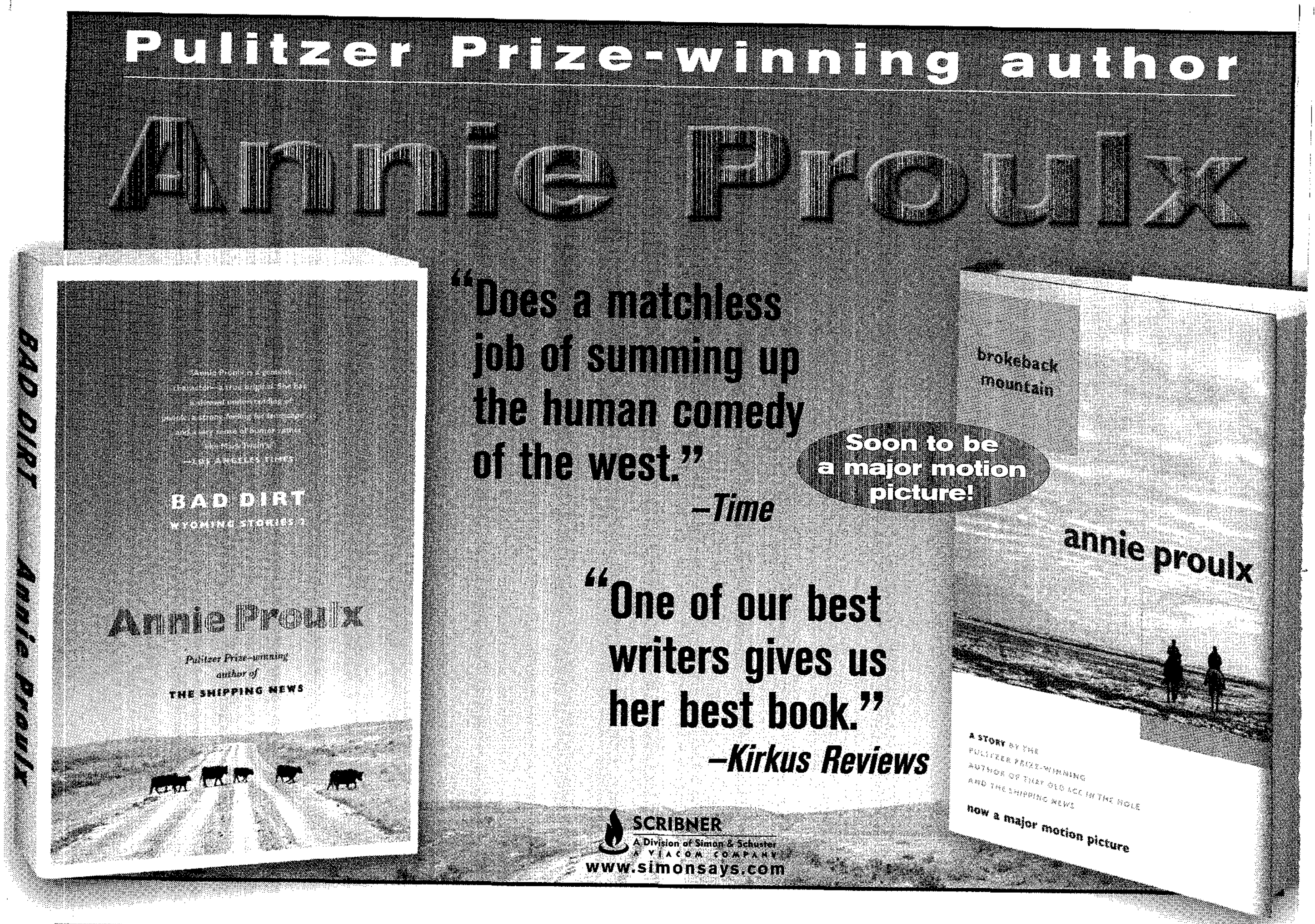

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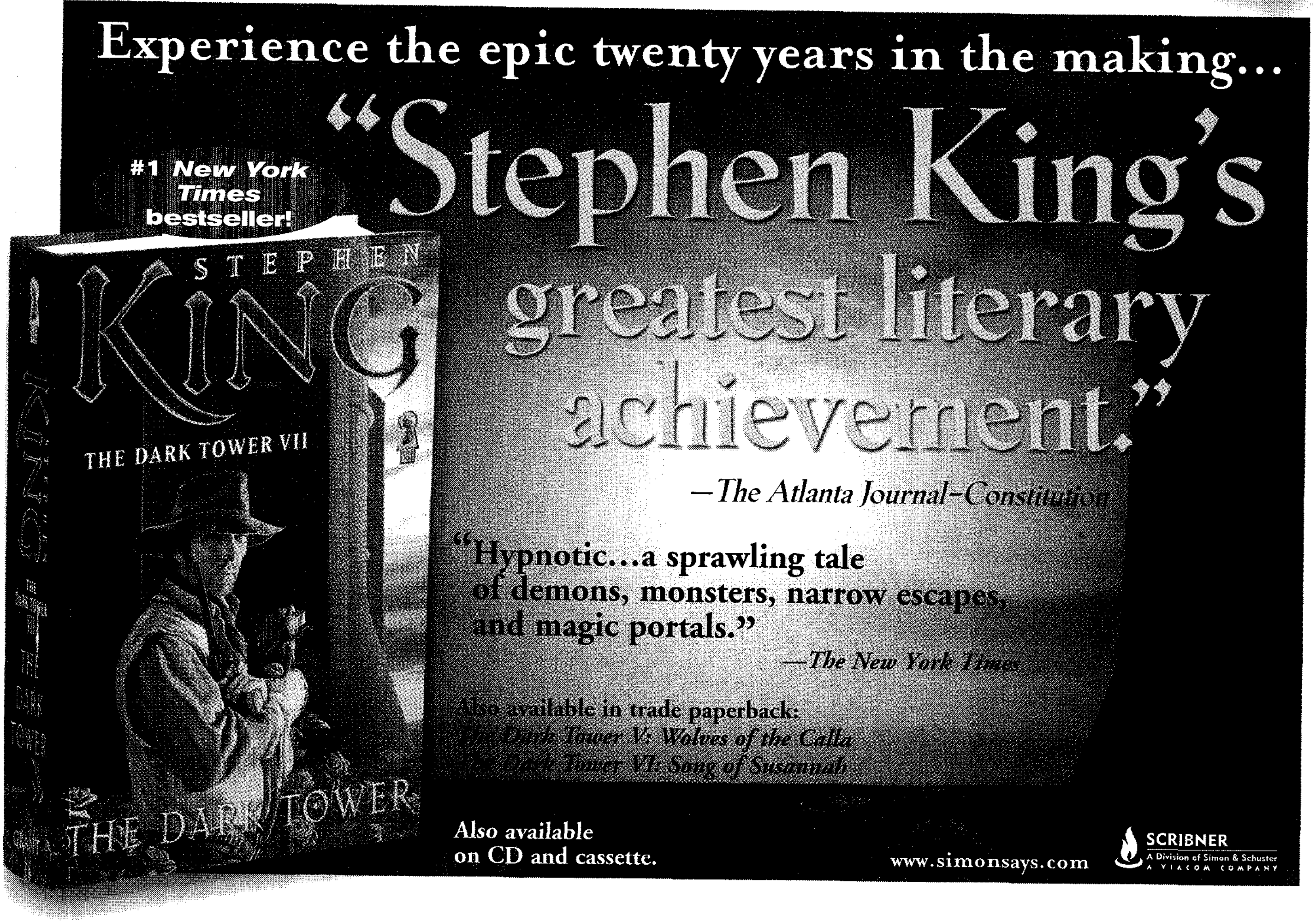

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KING

The New Yorker for the past decade.

Stephen King has published more than forty books, including the novels "Carrie," "The Shining," and, most recently,"The Dark Tower VII"; the story collections "The Man in the Black Suit" and "Everything's Eventual"; and the personal history "On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft," parts of which were originally published in *The New Yorker.*

Stephen King

George Saunders is the author of the short-story collections "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline" and "Pastoralia"; parts of both books were originally published in *The New Yorker.* His new book, "The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil," is out this month, and a story collection, "The Red Bow," is forthcoming next year.

10 A.M. Celeste Bartos Forum
The New York Public Library
Entrance on 42nd Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues

Advocacy Journalism

Reporting on what you care about.

Nicholas Lemann, moderator. With **Christiane Amanpour**, **Jon Lee Anderson**, **Katherine Boo**, and **Rich Lowry**.

Nicholas Lemann has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1999 and currently writes the Wayward Press column for the magazine. He is the dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism. In his most recent article, "Fear and Favor," which appeared in the February 14th issue, he wrote about criticism of the media during the 2004 election.

Christiane Amanpour is CNN's chief international correspondent. Over the past twenty-three years, she has reported on most crises from the world's major conflict zones, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Israel, Pakistan, Somalia, Rwanda, and the Balkans. Her coverage of the Balkans, from 1991 to 1997, won, among other awards, a News and Documentary Emmy and two Peabody Awards.

Jon Lee Anderson has been a staff writer for *The New Yorker* since 1999. He is the author of "The Lion's Grave: Dispatches from Afghanistan," "Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life," "Guerrillas," and, most recently, "The Fall of Baghdad." His Profile of Hamid Karzai, the President of Afghanistan, appeared in the June 6th issue of the magazine.

Katherine Boo is a staff writer at *The New Yorker.* Her article "The Marriage Cure," on government-sponsored seminars to encourage marriage for the poor, received a National Magazine Award for Feature Writing last year. She received the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service in 2000 and was named a MacArthur Fellow in 2002.

Rich Lowry joined the *National Review* in 1992, after finishing second in the magazine's young-writers contest. In 1994, he moved to Washington to cover Congress, and in 1997, at the age of twenty-nine, he became editor-in-chief of the magazine. He is also a political analyst for Fox News and the author of "Legacy: Paying the Price for the Clinton Years."

10 A.M. Florence Gould Hall
French Institute Alliance Française
55 East 59th Street

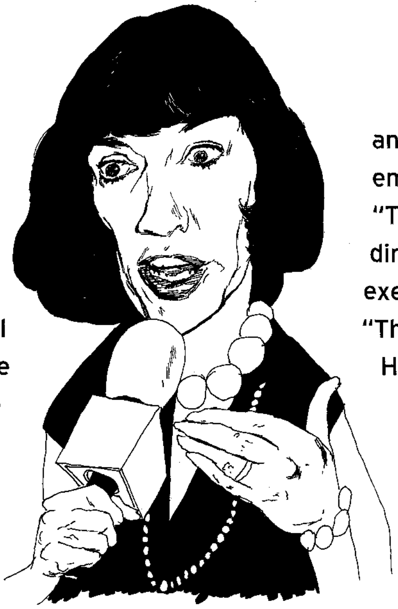
Religion and Politics

Separate but equal?

Peter J. Boyer, moderator. With **Stephen L. Carter**, **Roberta Combs**, **Susan Jacoby**, and **Jim Towey**.

Peter J. Boyer has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1992. Most recently, he has written on religious-discrimination lawsuits against public schools, in "Jesus in the Classroom," for the March 21st issue, and on the new Pope and the history of Church orthodoxy, in "A Hard Faith," for the May 16th issue.

Stephen L. Carter is a law professor at Yale University. He is the author of seven books on law, ethics, and politics, among them "God's Name in Vain," "The Dissent of the Governed," and "The Culture of Disbelief," as well as a novel, "The Emperor of Ocean Park." His second novel will be published next year. Previously, he served as a law clerk for Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall.



Christiane Amanpour

Roberta Combs has been the chairman and president of the Christian Coalition of America since 2001. A former chair of the South Carolina Christian Coalition, she was selected by Pat Robertson to become executive vice-president of the national organization in 1999. She has been a delegate to the Republican National Convention since the late nineteen-eighties and has served on the National Platform Committee.

Susan Jacoby is the author of seven books, including "Freethinkers: A History of American Secularism," which was published last year. She began her writing career in 1965, as a reporter for the Washington *Post*. She is currently the program director of the metropolitan New York branch of the Center for Inquiry, a secular-humanist research and advocacy organization.

Jim Towey is the White House Assistant to the President and director of the Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. In 1996, he founded Aging with Dignity, a national nonprofit organization that helps families plan for times of serious illness. Previously, he ran Florida's health-and-social-services agency and served for twelve years as legal counsel for Mother Teresa.

1 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum
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Anarchy and Animation

Cartoon chaos theory.

Tad Friend, moderator. With **Brad Bird**, **Matt Maiellaro**, **Trey Parker**, **Matt Stone**, and **Dave Willis**.

Tad Friend, a staff writer at *The New Yorker*, has been contributing pieces since 1987. He writes the magazine's Letter from California and often reports on the entertainment business. He is the author of "Lost in Mongolia," a compilation of articles and essays, many of which were first published in *The New Yorker*.

Brad Bird is a director at Pixar Animation Studios and the writer and director of the Academy Award-winning animated feature "The Incredibles." He also wrote and directed "The Iron Giant" and served as executive consultant on the TV series "The Simpsons" and "King of the Hill." He completed his first animated film at the age of fourteen.

Matt Maiellaro is the co-creator, with Dave Willis, of the animated TV series "Aqua Teen Hunger Force," which is currently being adapted for a feature film. He is the voice of the character Err, a two-dimensional inhabitant of the moon, among other characters. He joined the Cartoon Network in 1993, when he began writing for the animated TV series "Space Ghost Coast to Coast."

Trey Parker is the co-creator, with Matt Stone, of the animated TV series "South Park" and the live-action sitcom "That's My Bush!" He has co-written and co-directed, with Mr. Stone, the films "South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut" and "Team America: World Police." He has also directed two live-action feature films, "Cannibal! The Musical" and "Orgazmo," in which he starred.

Matt Stone, the co-creator, with Trey Parker, of "South Park," is the basis for the series' fictional character Kyle Broflovski. With Mr. Parker, he co-wrote and co-directed the films "South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut" and "Team America: World Police," and co-created the live-action sitcom "That's My Bush!" He also produced and acted in Mr. Parker's two live-action films.

Dave Willis is the co-creator, with Matt Maiellaro, of "Aqua Teen Hunger Force," which features three anthropomorphic fast-food products. He is the voice of the characters Meatwad, Carl, and Ignignokt. Previously, he was a writer and producer for the animated TV series "Space Ghost Coast to Coast." He has also worked at a fishery in Alaska and on a towboat on the Mississippi.

1 P.M. Directors Guild of America
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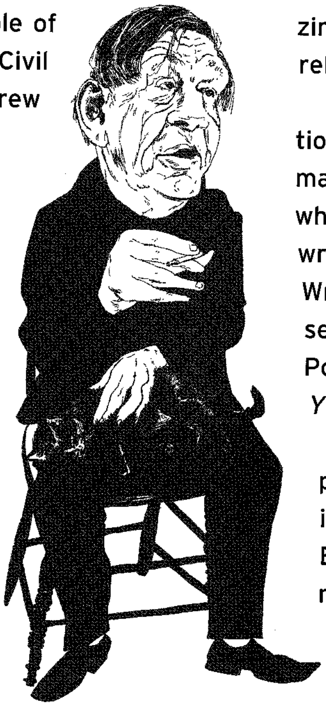
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2005

Rereading W. H. Auden

As a young poet in nineteen-thirties England, W. H. Auden quickly became the voice of his generation, fusing the immediacy of vernacular speech with technical and formal virtuosity. An Oxford graduate whose poor academic showing belied a commanding intellect, he was an enfant terrible of the left. He served in the Spanish Civil War as an ambulance driver, but grew disillusioned with the insularity of the Communists; back in England, he developed a similar distaste for the inbred British literati. On the eve of the Second World War, he emigrated to New York and turned from the political causes of his youth to ethical and spiritual concerns, producing four of his greatest works: "For the Time Being," "New Year Letter," "The Age of Anxiety," and "The Sea and the Mirror." He spent most of his last decades living quietly in Greenwich Village, before returning to England in 1972. He died in Vienna in 1973. In the wake of September 11th, his work has gained renewed prominence and urgency. As Adam Gopnik has written, "Even people who don't read poems often turn to poetry at moments when it matters, and Auden matters now."



W. H. Auden

Adam Gopnik, moderator. With **Hilton Als, J. D. McClatchy, Ian McEwan, Louis Menand, Katha Pollitt, Craig Raine, Mark Strand**, and **Helen Vendler**.

Adam Gopnik has been writing for *The New Yorker* since 1986. He is the author of "Paris to the Moon," which includes many of his Paris Journal essays from the magazine, and the children's book "The King in the Window," which is out in the fall. His Critic at Large piece on Auden ran in the September 23, 2002, issue of the magazine.

Hilton Als, a staff writer and theatre critic at *The New Yorker*, has been contributing articles on literature, photography, and popular culture since 1994. He has received a Guggenheim fellowship and a George Jean Nathan Award for Dramatic Criticism. He is the author of "The Women," a collection of essays on gender and race. In the January 17th issue of the magazine, he wrote about Christopher Isherwood and his relationship with Auden.

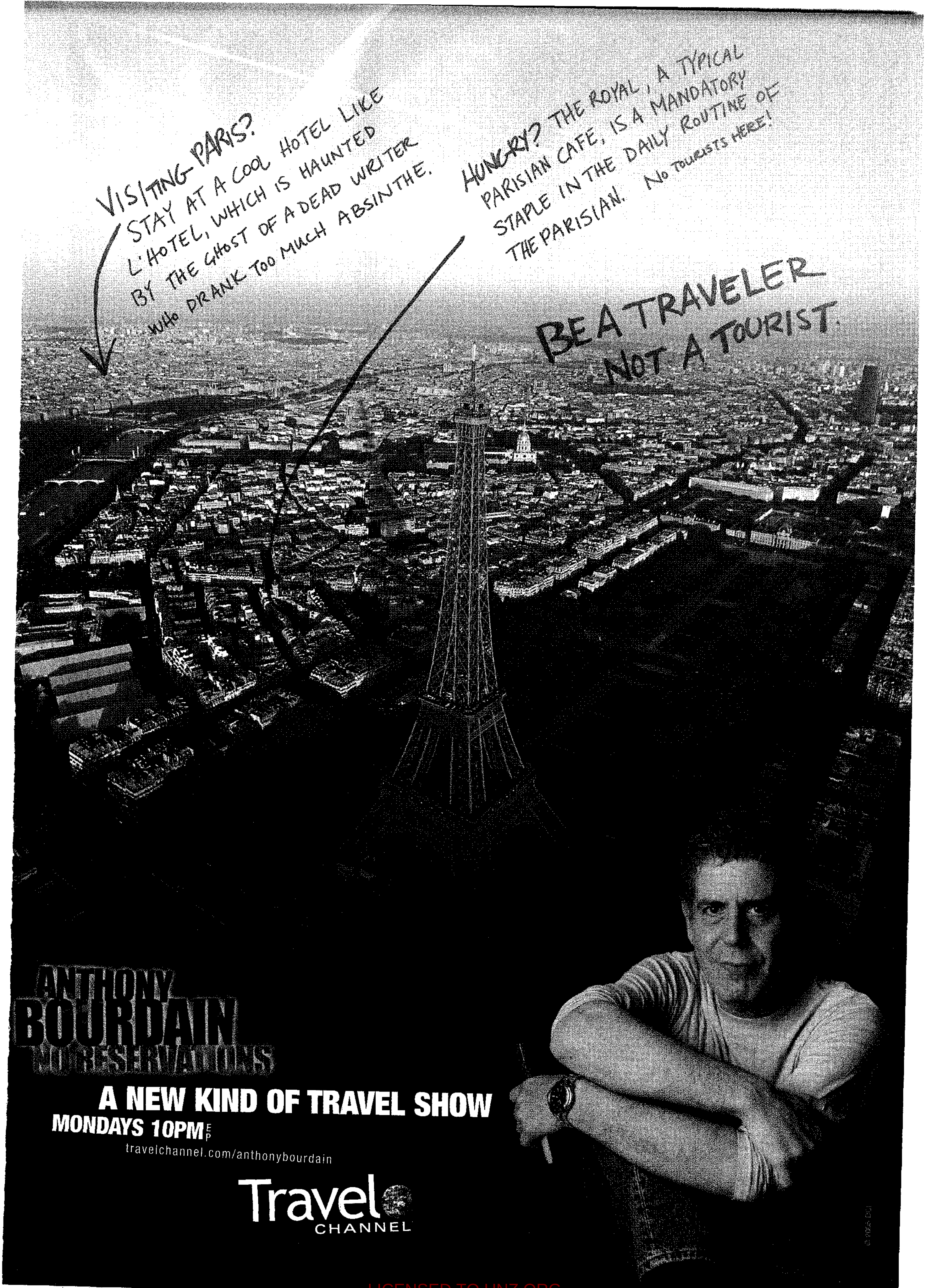
J. D. McClatchy is the author of five poetry collections, among them "Ten Commandments" and "Hazmat," which was a Pulitzer Prize finalist, and parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. He has also written two essay collections, the study "American Writers at Home," and eight opera librettos. He has served as a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets and teaches at Yale, where he also edits *The Yale Review*.

Ian McEwan's most recent novel, "Saturday," was published this year; parts of the book first appeared in *The New Yorker*. His other novels include the Booker Prize-winning "Amsterdam" and "Atonement," which draws on poetry written by W. H. Auden on the eve of the Second World War.

Louis Menand has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1991 and a staff writer since 2001. He is the author of "The Metaphysical Club," which won a Pulitzer Prize, and "American Studies"; parts of both books first appeared in *The New Yorker*. He is the Bass Professor of English and American Literature at Harvard University.

Katha Pollitt writes the Subject to Debate column for *The Nation*, where she has been a contributor since 1980. Her books include "Subject to Debate," "Reasonable Creatures," and the poetry collection "Antarctic Traveller," which won a National Book Critics Circle Award. She has been contributing poems, essays, and criticism to *The New Yorker* since 1975.

Craig Raine's many poetry books include "The Onion, Memory," "A Martian Sends a Postcard Home," "Rich," and "History: The Home Movie," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*. He is also the author of two books of literary criticism and essays, "Haydn and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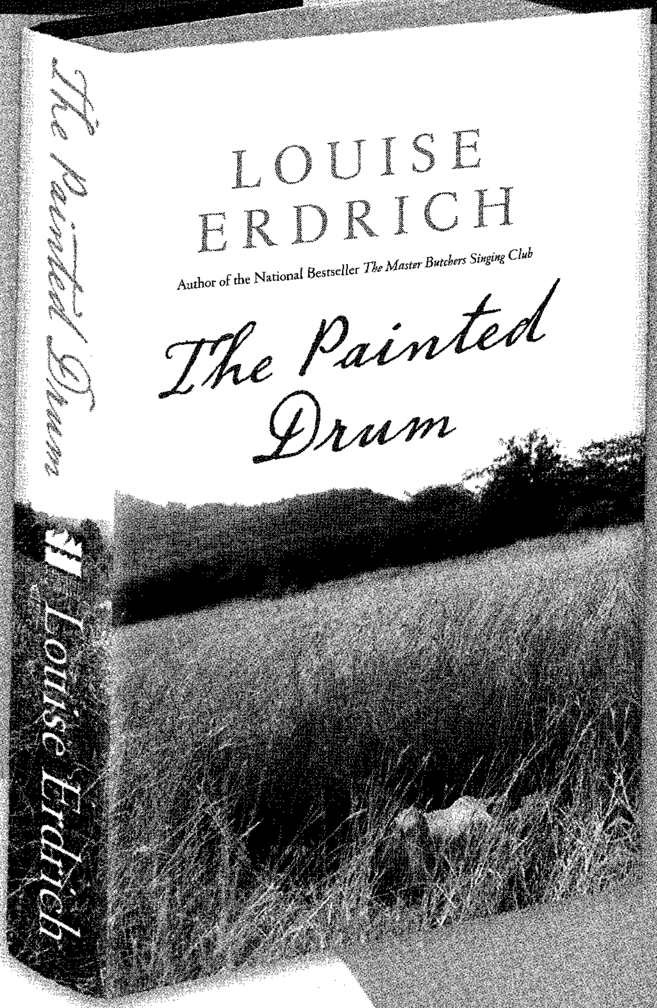
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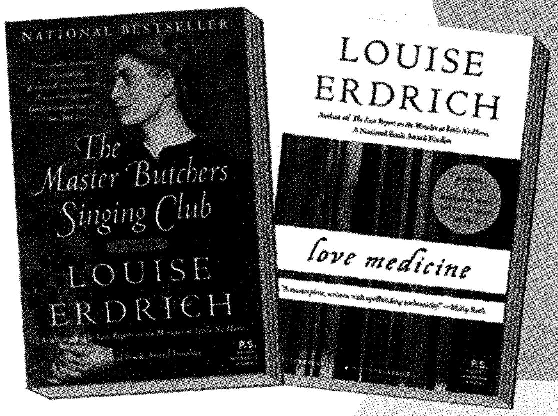
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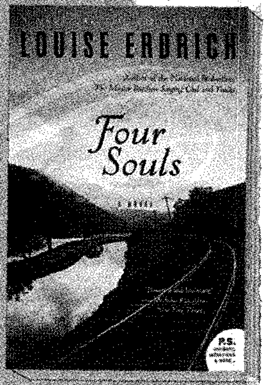
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the Valve Trumpet" and "In Defence of T. S. Eliot," which will be published next year. He is the founder and editor of the literary magazine *Areté*.

Mark Strand is the author of more than ten poetry collections, among them "Blizzard of One," which won a Pulitzer Prize, and "Reasons for Moving." He was Poet Laureate of the United States from 1990 to 1991. He has been contributing poetry to *The New Yorker* since 1962, most recently "My Name," which ran in the April 11th issue.

Helen Vendler is the A. Kingsley Porter University Professor at Harvard. She has contributed book reviews to *The New Yorker* since 1978. Her numerous books include studies of Yeats, Herbert, Keats, Stevens, Shakespeare, and Seamus Heaney; her most recent work, "Invisible Listeners: Lyric Intimacy in Herbert, Whitman, and Ashbery," is out this fall.

4 P.M. Florence Gould Hall
French Institute Alliance Française
55 East 59th Street

Stage to Studio

When performers produce.

Sasha Frere-Jones, moderator. With **Steve Albini, Ani DiFranco, Ric Ocasek**, and **the RZA.**

Sasha Frere-Jones is the pop-music critic for *The New Yorker*. From 1991 to 2003, he was a member of the band Ui, whose albums include "Answers," "Lifelike," and "Sidelong." In 1998, he released "Standing Upright on a Curve," a solo guitar album. He is currently finishing an album of loud rock songs.

Steve Albini is a guitarist, recording engineer, and occasional music writer. Formerly a member of the bands Big Black and Rapeman, he currently plays with the group Shellac. He has overseen the making of the albums "In Utero," by Nirvana, and "Surfer Rosa," by the Pixies, among many others.

Ani DiFranco is a singer, songwriter, and guitarist. She produced her first sixteen solo albums and co-produced her seventeenth, "Knuckle Down," which was released this year. She has also produced recordings by the artists Dan Bern, Janis Ian, and the group Bitch and Animal, and co-produced Drums & Tuba and Hammell on Trial for her Righteous Babe Records label.

Ric Ocasek was the front man for the rock band the Cars, which sold more than twenty-five million albums in the nineteen-seventies and eighties. He has produced recordings by Bad Brains, Guided by Voices, Hole, Weezer, and No Doubt, and served as vice-president of artists and repertoire at Elektra. His solo albums include "Troublizing" and "Nexterday."

The RZA, whose real name is Robert Diggs, is a founding member of the hip-hop group the Wu-Tang Clan. He has produced all their albums and also the solo efforts of Method Man and the late ODB. As a film composer, his credits include "Kill Bill: Vol. 1," which was nominated for a BAFTA, and "Kill Bill: Vol. 2." He is the author of "The Wu-Tang Manual," published this year, and will star in the film "Derailed," with Clive Owen.

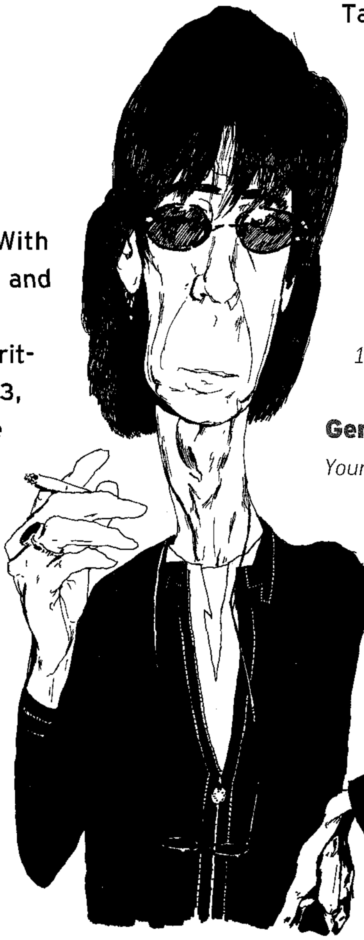
4 P.M. Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway

Generation X Fashion

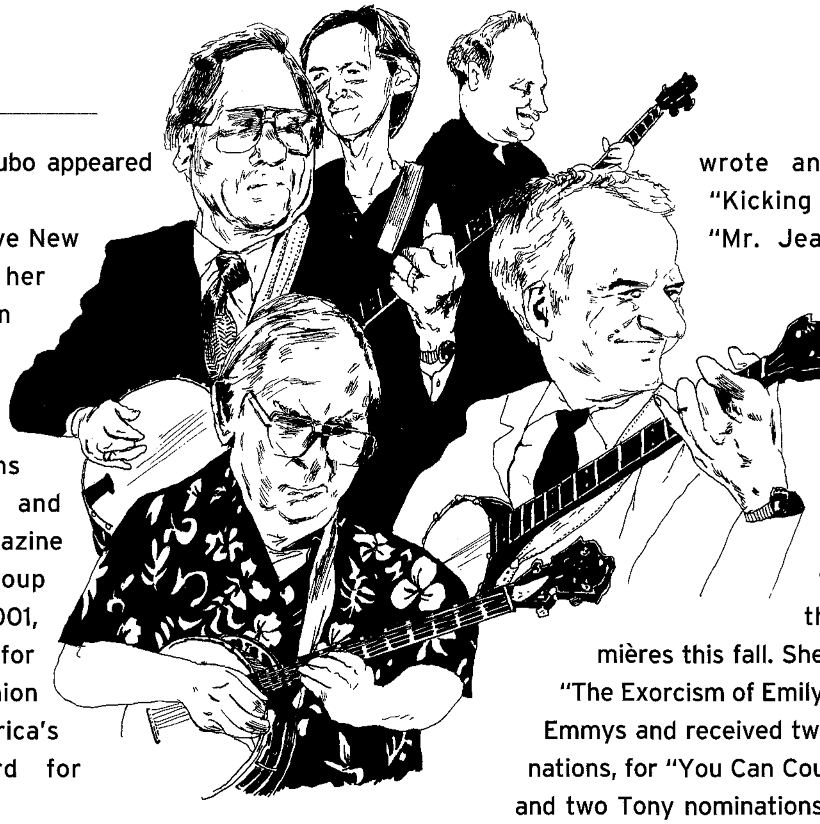
Young American designers.

Judith Thurman, moderator. With **Alice Roi, Behnaz Sarafpour**, and **Tara Subkoff.**

Judith Thurman has been contributing essays, reviews, and criticism to *The New Yorker* since 1987, and currently writes the In Fashion column. She is the author of biographies of Colette and Isak Dinesen, and has won a National Book Award and the Harold D. Vursell Memorial Award. Her Profile of the fashion



Ric Ocasek



Earl Scruggs, Tony Ellis, Pete Wernick, Charles Wood, and Steve Martin

designer Rei Kawakubo appeared in the July 4th issue.

Alice Roi, a native New Yorker, opened her design house in 1999, at the age of twenty-three. Previously, she studied at the Parsons School of Design and worked at *Elle* magazine and Fashion Group International. In 2001, she was nominated for the Council of Fashion Designers of America's Perry Ellis Award for Womenswear.

Behnaz Sarafpour began her career at the Parsons School of Design, where she received the Golden Thimble Award. She has worked with Narciso Rodriguez, Richard Tyler, and Isaac Mizrahi, and for four years she was the designer of the Barneys New York Collection. She launched her eponymous clothing line in 2001.

Tara Subkoff designs for the label Imitation of Christ, which she co-founded, with Matt Damhave, in 2000. Their inaugural New York fashion show was staged at an East Village funeral parlor. An art-school dropout, she has appeared in numerous films, including "The Last Days of Disco," "The Cell," and, most recently, "Anchorman."

4 P.M. Ailey Studios

405 West 55th Street

EARLY SHIFT

Noah Baumbach and Laura Linney talk with Susan Morrison

How I made my movie.

Noah Baumbach is the writer and director of the forthcoming film "The Squid and the Whale," about his childhood in brownstone Brooklyn. Previously, he wrote and directed the films "Kicking and Screaming" and "Mr. Jealousy," and co-wrote, with Wes Anderson, "The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou." He has contributed humor pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1999.

Laura Linney stars in the film "The Squid and the Whale," which premières this fall. She also appears in the film "The Exorcism of Emily Rose." She has won two Emmys and received two Academy Award nominations, for "You Can Count on Me" and "Kinsey," and two Tony nominations, for "The Crucible" and "Sight Unseen."

Susan Morrison is the articles editor of *The New Yorker* and the editor of Talk of the Town and of Shouts & Murmurs.

7 P.M. Pavilion Park Slope

188 Prospect Park West Brooklyn

(Please note: Extended film clips from "The Squid and the Whale" will be shown. Tickets to this event are $20.)

Tracy Chapman talks with Dana Goodyear: A Conversation with Music

Songs of love and social justice.

Tracy Chapman started playing guitar and writing songs as a child. While she was a student at Tufts University, and performing in Boston coffeehouses, she was signed to a major label. In 1988, she recorded her eponymous début album, which won four Grammys, including Best New Artist. Her latest release, "Where You Live," is out this fall.

Dana Goodyear is a senior editor at *The New Yorker*. Her poetry collection, "Honey and Junk," came out earlier this year.

7 P.M. Satalla

37 West 26th Street

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SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2005

Tony Ellis, Earl Scruggs, Pete Wernick, and Charles Wood talk with Steve Martin: A Conversation with Music

The great American banjo.

Tony Ellis was taught the banjo by his grandmother. As a young player, he performed with Bill Monroe's Blue Grass Boys and with Mac Wiseman at Carnegie Hall. His recordings include "Dixie Banner," "Farewell My Home," "Quaker Girl," and "Sounds Like Bluegrass to Me"; his new album, "The Quest," was released in May.

Earl Scruggs began playing banjo at the age of four; at the age of ten, he developed the three-finger picking style that came to define modern bluegrass. He performed with Lester Flatt and the Foggy Mountain Boys for twenty years, before founding the Earl Scruggs Revue with his three sons. In 2002, he won a Grammy for "Foggy Mountain Breakdown," which featured Steve Martin on second banjo.

Pete Wernick, also known as "Dr. Banjo," formed the band Country Cooking in the early seventies while working as a sociologist at Cornell University. He currently performs with the bands Live Five, whose most recent album is "Up All Night," and Hot Rize, and with his wife, Joan, a singer-guitarist.

Charles Wood started studying the banjo at the age of fifteen. A national banjo champion, he currently performs with Curtis Blackwell and the Dixie Bluegrass Boys and the Wild Hog Band. His albums include "Somewhere Over the Banjo" and "Banjo Noel"; his latest release, "Tour de Banjo," is out in September. He won the RockyGrass banjo contest in July.

Steve Martin has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1996. He has published two novels and a collection, "Pure Drivel," which includes many of his humor pieces from the magazine. A self-taught banjo player, he appeared on the 2001 album "Earl Scruggs and Friends." He has used the instrument in his standup comedy act and in his films.

7 P.M. Directors Guild of America

110 West 57th Street

Edie Falco

Edie Falco talks with Jeffrey Toobin

One tough cookie.

Edie Falco has received three Emmys and two Golden Globes for her performance as Carmela Soprano on the HBO series "The Sopranos." Her Broadway credits include "Side Man," "Frankie and Johnny in the Claire de Lune," and "*'night,* Mother." She has acted in numerous films, winning the Los Angeles Film Critics Association Award for "Sunshine State," and will appear in the upcoming "The Quiet," "The Great New Wonderful," and "Freedomland."

Jeffrey Toobin has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1993. He is also the senior legal analyst for CNN. He is the author of "Too Close to Call," about the 2000 election; "A Vast Conspiracy," about the Clinton sex scandal; and "The Run of His Life," about the trial of O. J. Simpson.

7 P.M. Coda

34 East 34th Street

Sonny Rollins talks with Stanley Crouch

Jazz master.

Sonny Rollins has played the tenor saxophone for more than half a century. Before the age of twenty, he recorded tracks with Babs Gonzales, J. J. Johnson, Bud Powell, and Miles Davis, and played in Thelonius Monk's band. His many albums include "Saxophone Colossus," "Way Out West," and "The Bridge." He received a Grammy for Lifetime Achievement in 2004.

Stanley Crouch is a music critic, essayist, novelist, and television commentator. He has served as an artistic consultant at Lincoln Center since 1987 and is the co-founder of Jazz at Lincoln Center. He is currently at work on a biography of Charlie Parker. His Profile of Sonny Rollins, "The Colossus," appeared in the May 9th issue of *The New Yorker.*

7 P.M. Ailey Studios

405 West 55th Street

(Please note: This event does not feature musical performance.)

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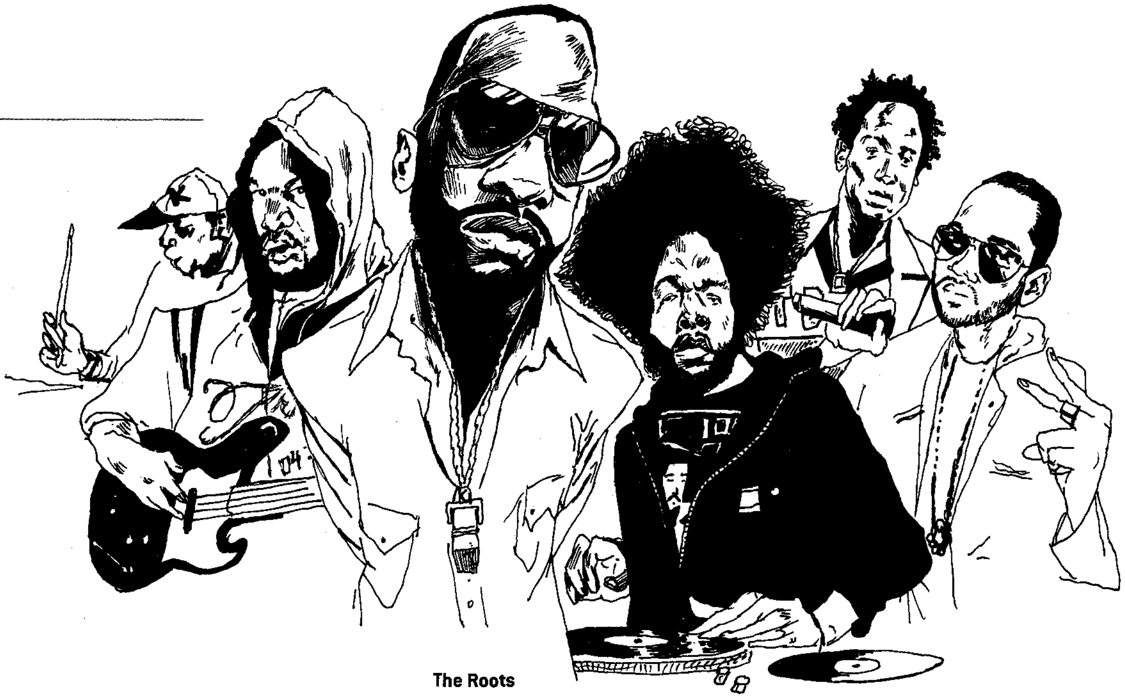
SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2005



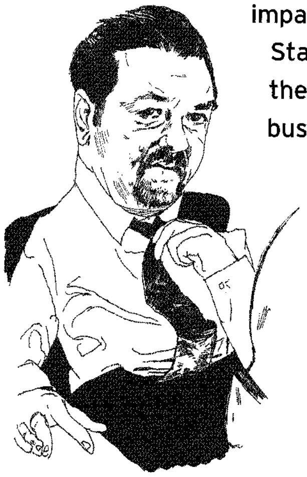
The Roots

Sleater-Kinney talk with James Surowiecki: A Conversation with Music

The power of three.

Sleater-Kinney started out ten years ago as a side project by the singer-guitarists Corin Tucker and Carrie Brownstein, both veterans of the Pacific Northwest music scene. Drummer Janet Weiss joined them in 1996. They have recorded seven albums, including "Dig Me Out," "One Beat," and, most recently, "The Woods," which came out in May.

James Surowiecki has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2000 and currently writes the Financial Page for the magazine. His recent subjects include the impact of oil prices on the United States economy, aid to Africa, and the new economics of the music business. He is the author of "The Wisdom of Crowds."



Ricky Gervais

7 P.M. Newspace
530 West 21st Street

LATE SHIFT
Ricky Gervais talks with Nancy Franklin

Office worker.

Ricky Gervais was the star of the award-winning BBC TV series "The Office," which he co-wrote and co-directed with Stephen Merchant. He has toured the United Kingdom with two standup-comedy one-man shows, "Animals" and "Politics," and published a children's book, "Flanimals." His new TV series, "Extras," will air this fall on HBO.

Nancy Franklin joined the staff of *The New Yorker* in 1978 as a typist. Since 1989, she has contributed essays, Profiles, book reviews, and humor pieces to the magazine. From 1994 to 2002, she was a theatre critic; currently, she writes the On Television column. Her review of "The Office" appeared last fall.

10 P.M. Coda
34 East 34th Street

The Roots talk with Malcolm Gladwell: A Conversation with Music

Grassroots hip-hop.

The Roots, a hip-hop ensemble, started out in 1987 playing on street corners in Philadelphia. Founded by drummer Ahmir (?uestlove) Thompson and Tariq (Black Thought) Trotter, the group released their major-label début, "Do You Want More?!!!??!," in 1995. Their most recent album, "The Tipping Point," takes its title from the book by the *New Yorker* staff writer Malcolm Gladwell.

Malcolm Gladwell has contributed fact pieces, essays, and criticism to *The New Yorker* since 1994. Previously, he was the New York City bureau chief for the Washington *Post*. He has written two books, "The Tipping Point" and "Blink," which came out this year.

10 P.M. Newspace
530 West 21st Street

Gillian Welch talk with Alec Wilkinson: A Conversation with Music

New-country minstrels.

Gillian Welch is an acoustic duo made up of the singer-songwriter Gillian Welch and the guitarist-songwriter David Rawlings. They started playing together as graduate students at the Berklee College of Music, in 1991, before moving to Nashville. Their albums include "Revival," "Hell Among the Yearlings," "Time (The Revelator)," and "Soul Journey."

Alec Wilkinson has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1980. His books include "My Mentor," about his friendship with the longtime *New Yorker* fiction editor William Maxwell, and "Mr. Apology," a collection of Profiles, essays, and reporting; parts of both books first appeared in the magazine. His Profile of Gillian Welch appeared in the September 20, 2004, issue.

10 P.M. Directors Guild of America
110 West 57th Street

Rufus Wainwright talks with Andy Young: A Conversation with Music

Heart on his sleeve.

Rufus Wainwright is a singer-songwriter and pianist. He began studying the piano at the age of six and performing at the age of thirteen. His albums include "Rufus Wainwright," "Poses," "Want One," and "Want Two." He is the son of the folk luminaries Loudon Wainwright III and Kate McGarrigle.

Andy Young works in *The New Yorker's* fact-checking and Goings On About Town departments.

10 P.M. Satalla
37 West 26th Street

Mike White talks with Cressida Leyshon

Schoolhouse rock.

Mike White wrote the screenplay for the film "School of Rock," about a failed rock musician who pretends to be a substitute teacher. His other film credits include the award-winning "Chuck & Buck," in which he also starred, "The Good Girl," and "Orange County." His next film project, "Nacho Libre," which stars Jack Black and is being directed by Jared Hess, begins shooting this fall.

Cressida Leyshon is the deputy fiction editor of *The New Yorker.*

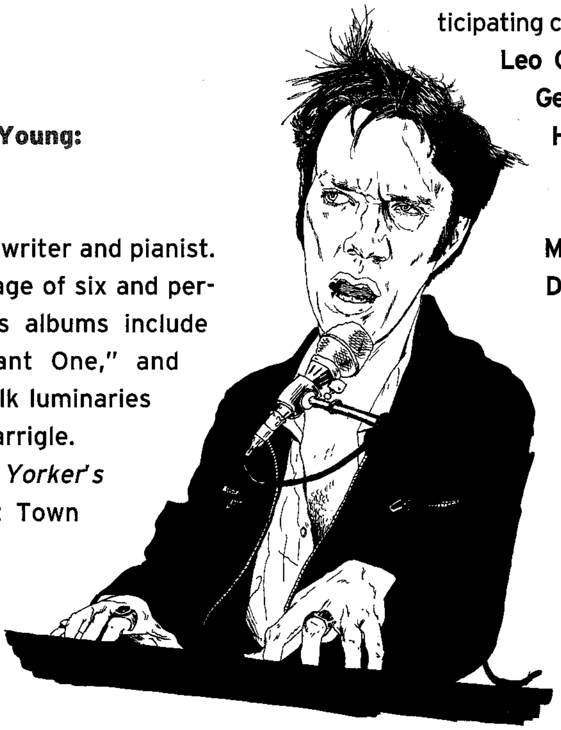
10 P.M. Film Forum
209 West Houston Street

(Please note: Tickets to this event are $20. Net proceeds from this event will benefit Film Forum's endowment campaign.)

Cartoonists Unleashed: A Variety Show

Cartoonists from *The New Yorker* will spend an evening onstage creating cartoons based on audience suggestions and sharing hidden talents that are best left undescribed. There are rumors of saxophones, magic tricks, and perhaps even live animals. Participating cartoonists include **Pat Byrnes, Leo Cullum, Matthew Diffee, Mort Gerberg, Alex Gregory, Marshall Hopkins, Edward Koren, Arnie Levin, Eric Lewis, Robert Mankoff, Marissa Acocella Marchetto, Victoria Roberts, Danny Shanahan, David Sipress, Barbara Smaller, Mick Stevens, Mike Twohy, Gahan Wilson, Jack Ziegler,** and more. Conceived by **Matthew Diffee** and hosted by **Andy Borowitz.**

10 P.M. Ailey Studios
405 West 55th Street



Rufus Wainwright

SEPTEMBER 25, 2005

A day of About Town excursions and events throughout the city, Master Classes, and a celebration of humor from the pages of The New Yorker. Tickets for About Town excursions vary in price and are listed in the program notes below. Master Classes are $35. Tickets for the Humor Revue are $50. There will also be a hands-on demonstration of "The Complete New Yorker," our new digital archive, as well as book signings, at Festival headquarters. (See pages 38 and 39 of the guide.)

ABOUT TOWN

Secrets of a Hash Slinger

Joel Eckerson and **Scott Gutstein** will talk with **Burkhard Bilger** about the life of the short-order cook on the Las Vegas Strip. Breakfast, prepared by Mr. Eckerson, will be served.

Joel Eckerson is a saucier at the Tropical Breeze Café, in the historic sixty-year-old Flamingo Hotel on the Las Vegas Strip. He has worked at the Flamingo for nineteen years. He specializes in eggs to order, and in a typical morning shift cooks as many as five hundred dishes, or more than a thousand eggs.

Scott Gutstein is the room chef at the Tropical Breeze Café, formerly Lindy's, in the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas. He supervises the staff of the twenty-four-hour coffee shop, which accommodates nearly a million patrons each year and grosses ten million dollars in annual revenue.

Burkhard Bilger has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 2001. He is the author of the book "Noodling for Flatheads." His writing for the magazine includes Profiles of ginseng poachers, Christian detectives, child prodigies, puzzle fanatics, and a cheese-making nun. His piece on the short-order cooks of the Flamingo coffee shop appears in the September 5th issue.

11 A.M. $40

Galaxy Global Eatery

15 Irving Place

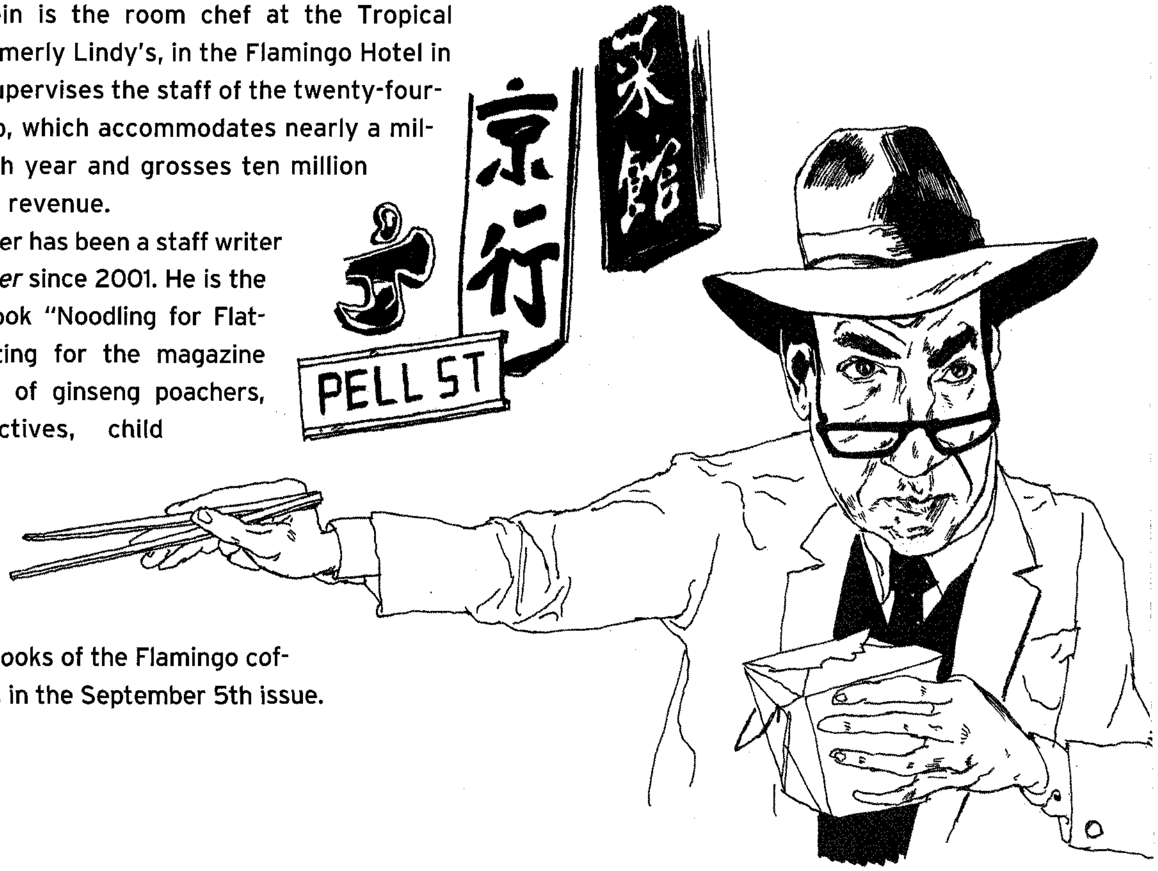
Come Hungry

Calvin Trillin returns to the streets of Chinatown for his fourth annual gastronomic walking tour, which will conclude with a dim-sum feast.

Calvin Trillin has written for *The New Yorker* on political and cultural aspects of American life for more than forty years. His many books include four on the subject of food: "American Fried," "Alice, Let's Eat," "Third Helpings," and "Feeding a Yen: Savoring Local Specialties, from Kansas City to Cuzco." His piece on Ecuadorian soup appears in the September 5th issue.

11 A.M. $90

[The starting point will be indicated on the tickets.]



Calvin Trillin

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2005

Sunday Family Movie:
"Wallace & Gromit–The Curse of the Were-Rabbit"

The New Yorker presents a special preview screening of DreamWorks Animation SKG and Aardman Features' "Wallace & Gromit–The Curse of the Were-Rabbit." A discussion between **Nick Park** and **Hendrik Hertzberg** will follow.

Nick Park is the creator of Wallace and Gromit and the co-director, with Steve Box, of "Wallace & Gromit–The Curse of the Were-Rabbit." Mr. Park has won three Academy Awards, for the animated short films "Creature Comforts," "The Wrong Trousers," and "A Close Shave." In 1985, he introduced the characters of Wallace and Gromit in the Academy Award-nominated film "A Grand Day Out."

Hendrik Hertzberg was a *New Yorker* Talk of the Town reporter from 1969 to 1977, before moving to Washington, where he served as a speechwriter for President Jimmy Carter and as the editor of *The New Republic*. He returned to *The New Yorker* in 1992 as an editor and writer and is the principal contributor to the Comment section of the magazine.

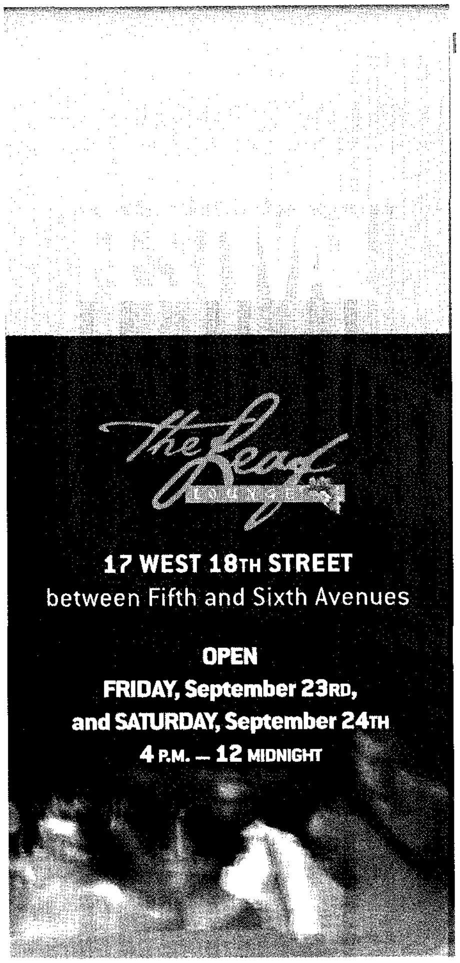
1 P.M. $5

Directors Guild of America

110 West 57th Street

Nyuk, Nyuk, Nyuk:
A Salute to the Three Stooges

A Sunday brunch accompanied by clips from classic Three Stooges episodes and a discussion moderated



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4 P.M. – 12 MIDNIGHT

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"Did it just get hotter in here?"

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by **Adam Green**. With **Fred Armisen**, **Mike Cerrone**, **Gilbert Gottfried**, and **John Landis**.

Adam Green has contributed humor and Talk of the Town pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1993. In college, he was an editor at the *Harvard Lampoon*. After a stint as a staff writer for "Saturday Night Live," he went on to write television comedy specials and to perform in night clubs as half of the comic duo Moynihan and Green.

Fred Armisen is currently in his fourth season as a cast member on "Saturday Night Live." He started out as a musician, playing drums with the post-punk band Trenchmouth and with Blue Man Group. His film credits include "Anchorman," "Melvin Goes to Dinner," and "Like Mike." He contributed his voice to the TV series "Crank Yankers."

Mike Cerrone is co-writing, with Peter and Bobby Farrelly, the screenplay for the upcoming film "The Three Stooges," which was the subject of a 2004 *New Yorker* article by Ian Parker. Mr. Cerrone also co-wrote, with the Farrelly brothers, the screenplay for "Me, Myself & Irene." His directorial début, "Homie Spumoni," is scheduled for release next year. His acting credits include "Kingpin" and "Stuck on You."

Gilbert Gottfried is a standup comedian and a regular guest on the "Tonight Show." Most recently, he appeared in the film "The Aristocrats," a documentary about the world's dirtiest joke. His other film

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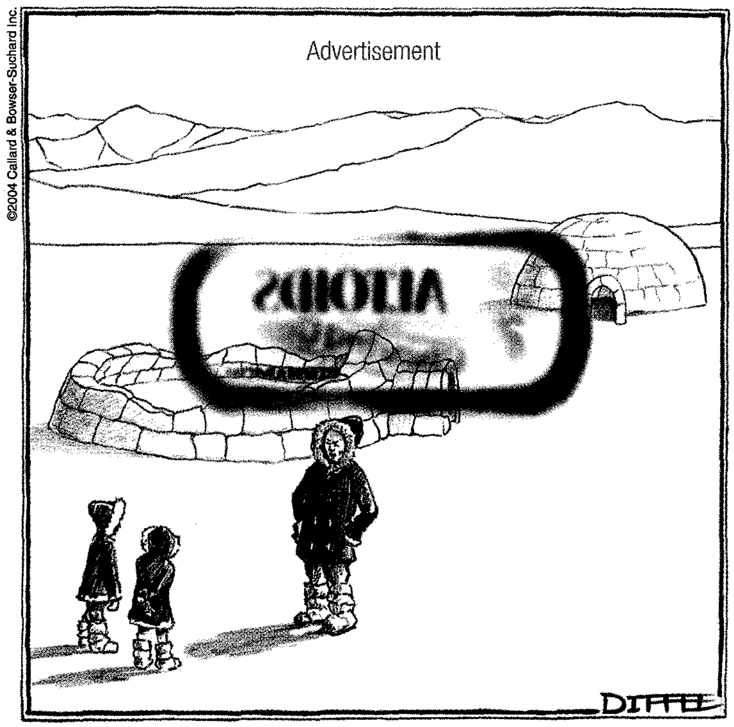
- Dinner for two at Les Halles, in New York City, compliments of the Travel Channel
- A signed copy of the "The Complete New Yorker," the new 8-DVD electronic archive of over 4,000 issues
- The last (#500) of a Limited Edition New Yorker Cartoon Watch by Timex

The New Yorker Festival Headquarters • Barnes & Noble, Union Square • 4th floor

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Sweepstakes starts September 23, 2005, at 10 A.M. E.S.T., and ends September 25, 2005, at 5:59 P.M. E.S.T. Each contestant must be 18 years of age or older and a legal resident of the United States as of the date of entry. Void outside New York State. Contestants may submit one (1) entry per person. One grand-prize winner will be selected at random from entries received on or about September 30, 2005. All decisions of the judges are final. Subject to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The odds of winning depend on the number of entries received. No substitutions for prizes except by sponsors, in which case a prize of equal or greater value will be substituted. Employees of The Condé Nast Publications, Inc., Volkswagen of America, Inc., Barnes & Noble, Samsung, Song, Banana Republic, Rockport, the *Financial Times*, Altoids, and the Discovery Channel, and their immediate families, are not eligible to enter. Complete rules and regulations will be included on entry forms at Festival Headquarters.
*Additional taxes/fees/restrictions apply. See the Rules for additional onformation.



"All right, which one of you fiddled with the thermostat?"

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 25, 2005

---

credits include "Beverly Hills Cop II," "Problem Child," "The Adventures of Ford Fairlane," and "Aladdin."

John Landis began his career in the mailroom of 20th Century Fox. A high-school dropout, he made his feature début as a writer-director at age twenty-one with "Schlock," a tribute to monster movies. His film credits include "National Lampoon's Animal House," "The Blues Brothers," "Trading Places," and "An American Werewolf in London."

2 P.M. $45
Gallagher's Steak House
228 West 52nd Street

Sunday Matinée with David Denby

A screening of the 1949 film-noir classic "The Third Man," Carol Reed's fable of moral ambiguity at the start of the Cold War, starring Joseph Cotten and Orson Welles, in an adaptation of the Graham Greene novella. A discussion with Mr. Denby will follow.

David Denby has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1993 and a staff writer and film critic since 1998. He is the author of "Great Books: My Adventures with Homer, Rousseau, Woolf, and Other Indestructible Writers of the Western World" and the memoir "American Sucker," which was published last year; parts of both books first appeared in the magazine.

4 P.M. (Free event; first come, first seated.)
Directors Guild of America
110 West 57th Street

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THE NEW YORKER FESTIVAL

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- Two tickets to select events on Saturday morning or afternoon
- Two tickets to the Festival's marquee event on Sunday afternoon
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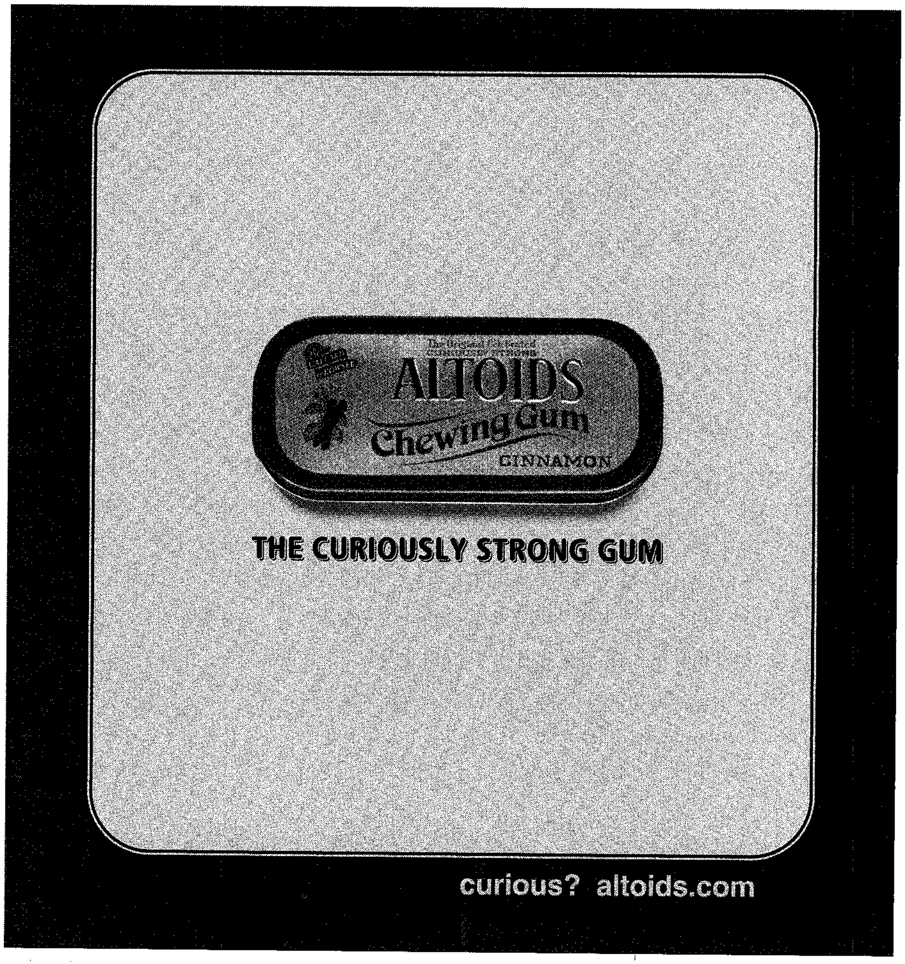


SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 25, 2005

MASTER CLASSES

Seminars for people with advanced interest in the topic.

Master Class in Reporting

With Jon Lee Anderson and
Larissa MacFarquhar

Jon Lee Anderson, a *New Yorker* staff writer, reports frequently from Iraq and has covered conflicts in Afghanistan and Angola as well. His books include "The Lion's Grave" and "The Fall of Baghdad."

Larissa MacFarquhar joined *The New Yorker* as a staff writer in 1998. She has written for the magazine on Michael Moore, Noam Chomsky, and Richard Posner, among many other subjects. Her most recent Profile, of Edward Albee, appeared in the April 4th issue.

10 A.M. Condé Nast Auditorium
4 Times Square
Entrance on 43rd Street

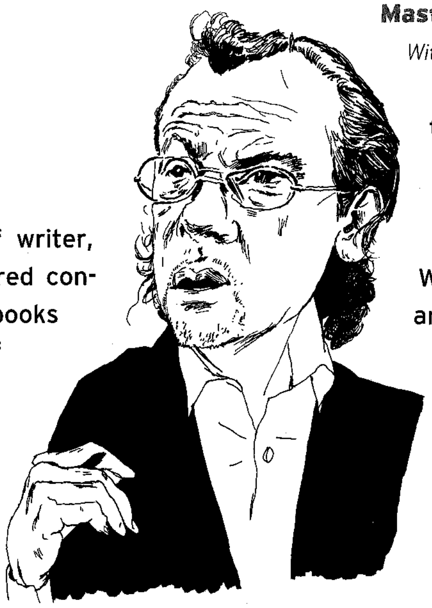
Master Class in the Graphic Novel

With Charles Burns and Chris Ware

Charles Burns contributes covers and illustrations to *The New Yorker.* He first gained prominence for his work in Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly's *Raw* magazine in the nineteen-eighties, and has since worked on projects ranging from an Iggy Pop album cover to a recent ad campaign for Altoids. His graphic novel "Black Hole" is forthcoming in October.

Chris Ware's graphic novel "Jimmy Corrigan: The Smartest Kid on Earth," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker*, was included in the 2002 Whitney Biennial. His collection "The ACME Novelty Library" is out this fall, and he is at work on two graphic novels. He began contributing drawings, comic strips, and cover art to the magazine in 1999.

1 P.M. Condé Nast Auditorium
4 Times Square
Entrance on 43rd Street



Jon Lee Anderson

Master Class in Fiction

With Donald Antrim and Edward P. Jones

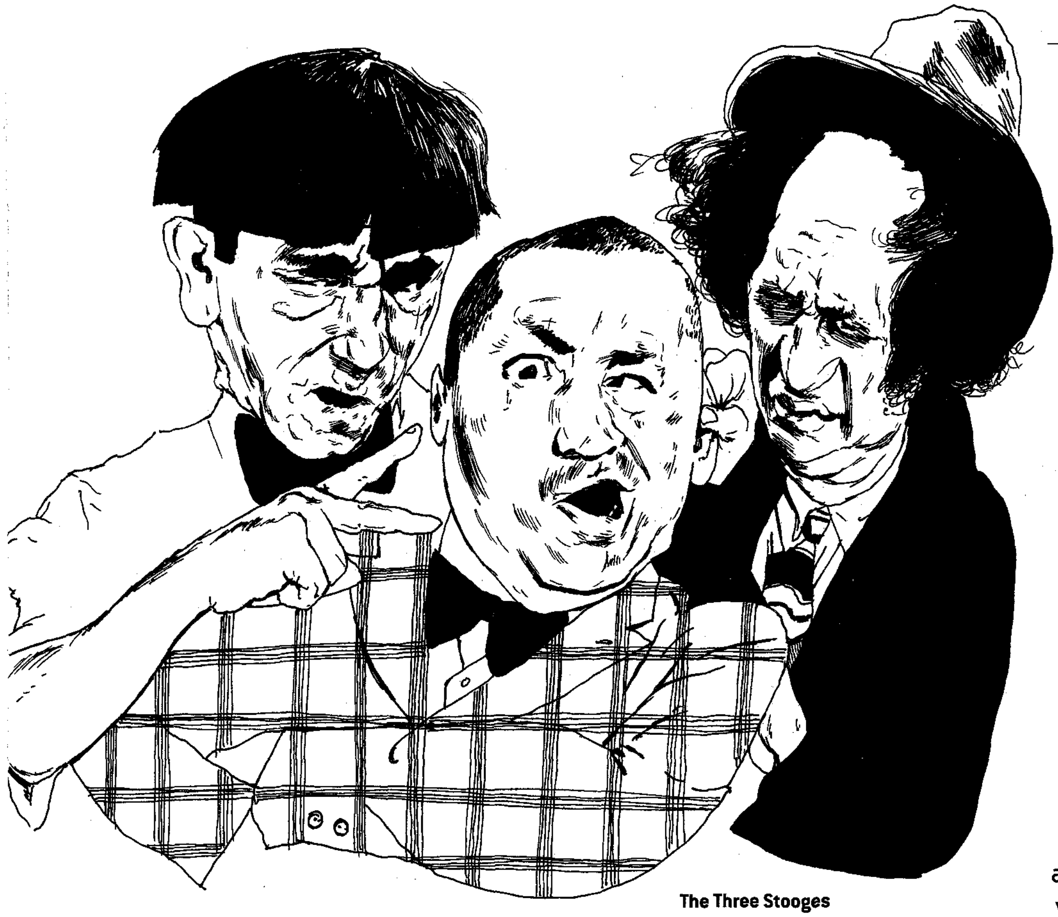
Donald Antrim has contributed fiction and memoir pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1996. His novels include "Elect Mr. Robinson for a Better World," "The Hundred Brothers," and "The Verificationist." He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 2002 and is currently at work on a memoir, parts of which have appeared in the magazine. His most recent *New Yorker* story, "Solace," appeared in the April 4th issue.

Edward P. Jones won a Pulitzer Prize and the International IMPAC Dublin Literary Award for his début novel, "The Known World." Most recently, his short story "Adam Robinson" appeared in *The New Yorker's* 2004 Winter Fiction Issue.

4 P.M. Condé Nast Auditorium
4 Times Square
Entrance on 43rd Street

A HUMOR REVUE

Humor has been a mainstay of *The New Yorker* since its inception, in 1925. Harold Ross, *The New Yorker's* founding editor, called his new magazine "a comic weekly" and featured the work of writers such as Dorothy Parker, James Thurber, S. J. Perelman, A. J. Liebling, and Ring Lardner, among the country's greatest literary humorists. The tradition has continued, over the course of eight decades (W. H. Auden, in 1952, proclaimed *The New Yorker* "the best comic magazine in existence"), and this afternoon we celebrate it by bringing together some of the magazine's funniest writers: **Noah Baumbach, Andy Borowitz, Larry Doyle, Nancy Franklin, Frank Gannon, Anthony Lane, Patricia Marx, Bruce McCall, Rebecca Mead, David Owen,**



The Three Stooges

Paul Rudnick, George Saunders, Paul Simms, and **Mark Singer,** all of whom will read selections from their own work. **David Remnick,** the editor of *The New Yorker,* hosts the event.

Noah Baumbach has contributed humor pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1999. He wrote and directed the films "Kicking and Screaming," "Mr. Jealousy," and "The Squid and the Whale," which is scheduled for release this October. His piece "My Dog Is Tom Cruise" appeared in the July 25th issue of the magazine.

Andy Borowitz has contributed humor pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1998. His book "The Borowitz Report: The Big Book of Shockers," a collection of articles from his online column, is a finalist for the Thurber Prize for American Humor. Most recently, his piece "Try These Fun Hoaxes" appeared in the May 16th issue.

Larry Doyle has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1991. He won two Emmys as a writer and supervising producer of "The Simpsons" and wrote the films "Duplex" and "Looney Tunes: Back in Action." His *New Yorker* piece "Disengagements" appeared in the March 28th issue.

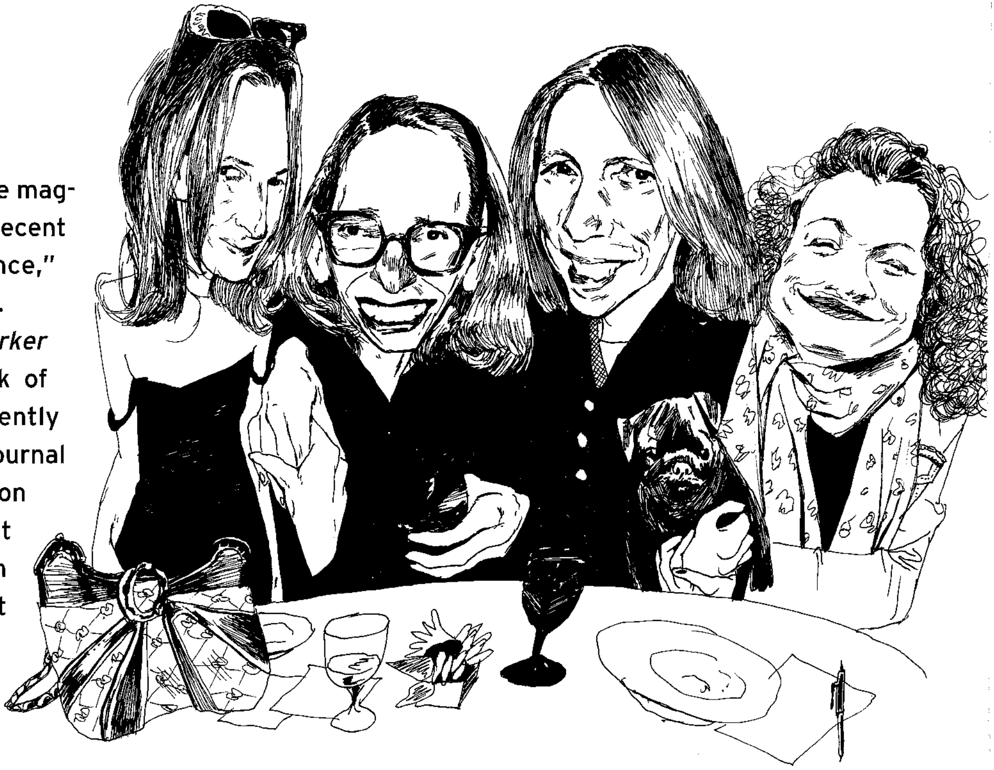
Nancy Franklin joined the staff of *The New Yorker* in 1978 and has been contributing Talk of the Town stories, Comment, Profiles, book reviews, and theatre reviews, as well as humor pieces, for the past sixteen years. Currently, she writes the On Television column.

Frank Gannon is the author of three humor books, including "Yo, Poe," parts of which first appeared in *The New Yorker,* and a memoir, "Midlife Irish." He has been a contributor to the magazine since 1985. His most recent piece, "Pre-Approved for Platinum," appeared in the March 21st issue.

Anthony Lane has been a film critic at *The New Yorker* since 1993. In 2001, his articles won the National Magazine Award for Reviews and Criticism. He is the author of "Nobody's Perfect," a collection of writings from the magazine.

Patricia Marx has contributed humor pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1984. Her many books include "Now Everybody Really Hates Me" and "How to Regain Your Virginity." She is currently working on a comedy for HBO. Her most recent *New Yorker* piece, "Audio Tour," appeared in the May 9th issue.

Bruce McCall's books include "The Last Dream-O-Rama," "Thin Ice," "Zany Afternoons," and, most recently, "All Meat Looks Like South America," parts of which were first published in *The New Yorker.* A con-



Funny Ladies: Marisa Acocella Marchetto, Roz Chast, Liza Donnelly, Victoria Roberts

tributor of art and humor to the magazine since 1979, his most recent piece, "Camp Correspondence," appeared in the July 4th issue.

Rebecca Mead, a *New Yorker* staff writer and frequent Talk of the Town contributor, recently began writing the New York Journal for the magazine. Her article on Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz appeared in the April 25th issue. She is at work on a book about the American wedding industry.

David Owen's books include "Copies in Seconds," "The Man Who Invented Saturday Morning," and "My Usual Game." He has been a contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1991. His article "Playing Out of the Snow," about winter golf in New York City, appeared in the March 28th issue.

Paul Rudnick is a playwright, novelist, and screenwriter. He won an Obie Award in 1993 for his play "Jeffrey." His film credits include "Addams Family Values," "In & Out," and "The Stepford Wives." He has contributed humor pieces to *The New Yorker* since 1998. His most recent piece, "A Mother's Story," appeared in the May 23rd issue.

George Saunders has contributed fiction to *The New Yorker* since 1992. His books include the short-story collections "CivilWarLand in Bad Decline," "Pastoralia," and, published this month, "The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil."

Paul Simms created the TV sitcom "NewsRadio" and was a writer and a co-executive producer for "The Larry Sanders Show." He has contributed humor to *The New Yorker* since 2004. His most recent piece, "Talking Chimp Gives His First Press Conference," appeared in the June 6th issue.

Mark Singer is the author of "Funny Money," "Mr. Personality," "Citizen K," "Somewhere in America," and "Character Studies," which was published in July. He has been a staff writer at *The New Yorker* since 1974.

3 P.M. Town Hall
123 West 43rd Street
(Tickets are also available at the Town Hall box office.)

HEADQUARTERS

The New Yorker Festival headquarters is at the Union Square Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 33 East 17th Street. There you can find additional information on Festival programs and purchase last-minute available tickets. You may also purchase books and DVDs by New Yorker and Festival contributors and take a test spin through "The Complete New Yorker," our new digital archive, a searchable eight-DVD set of 4,109 issues of the magazine, from February, 1925, to February, 2005. The headquarters will be open on Friday from 3 to 10 P.M., on Saturday from 10 A.M. to 10 P.M., and on Sunday from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M.

BOOK SIGNINGS

SATURDAY

11 A.M.
T. Coraghessan Boyle - "The Human Fly and Other Stories" and "Tooth and Claw and Other Stories"

12 NOON
Adam Gopnik - "The King in the Window"
Anthony Lane - "Nobody's Perfect"

1 P.M.
Ian McEwan - "Saturday"
Mark Strand - "100 Great Poems of the Twentieth Century" (editor)

2 P.M.
Michael Chabon - "The Final Solution: A Story of Detection"
Stephen King - "The Dark Tower VII: The Dark Tower"

3 P.M.
A. M. Homes - "Things You Should Know: A Collection of Stories"
Edward P. Jones - "The Known World"

4 P.M.
Ricky Gervais - "Flanimals"
George Saunders - "The Brief and Frightening Reign of Phil"

5 P.M.
Matt Maiellaro and Dave Willis - "Aqua Teen Hunger Force - Vol. 3" (DVD)

SUNDAY

11 A.M.
Lady Cartoonists
Liza Donnelly - "Funny Ladies: The New Yorker's Greatest Women Cartoonists and Their Cartoons"
Featuring: **Roz Chast, Carolita Johnson, Marisa Acocella Marchetto, Emily Richards, Victoria Roberts, Barbara Smaller,** and **Kim Warp**

12 NOON
Mark Danner - "Torture and Truth: America, Abu Ghraib, and the War on Terror"
George Packer - "The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq"

1 P.M.
Ian Frazier - "Gone to New York: Adventures in the City"
Mark Singer - "Character Studies: Encounters with the Curiously Obsessed"

2 P.M.
Mohammed Naseehu Ali - "The Prophet of Zongo Street"
Zadie Smith - "On Beauty"

3 P.M.
The RZA - "The Wu-Tang Manual"

4 P.M.
Jon Lee Anderson - "The Fall of Baghdad"
Hendrik Hertzberg - "Politics: Observations & Arguments, 1966-2004"

VENUES

Please note that age restrictions apply for some evening events.

37 Arts
450 West 37th Street

Ailey Studios
405 West 55th Street

Angel Orensanz Foundation
172 Norfolk Street

Anthology Film Archives
32 Second Avenue

Celeste Bartos Forum
The New York Public Library
Entrance on 42nd Street
between Fifth and Sixth Avenues

Condé Nast Auditorium
4 Times Square
Entrance on 43rd Street

Coda
34 East 34th Street
(Please note: You must be 21 to be admitted to evening events at this venue.)

Directors Guild of America
110 West 57th Street

Film Forum
209 West Houston Street

Florence Gould Hall
French Institute Alliance Française
55 East 59th Street

Galaxy Global Eatery
15 Irving Place

Gallagher's Steak House
228 West 52nd Street

Newspace
530 West 21st Street

Pavilion Park Slope
188 Prospect Park West
Brooklyn

Satalla
37 West 26th Street

Times Square Studios
1500 Broadway

Town Hall
123 West 43rd Street
(Tickets are also available at the Town Hall box office.)

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SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

FICTION NIGHT

Mohammed Naseehu Ali and Jhumpa Lahiri
7 P.M. Angel Orensanz Foundation ($15)

David Bezmozgis and T. Coraghessan Boyle
7 P.M. Newspace ($15)

Michael Chabon and Stephen King
7 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($15)

Edwidge Danticat and E. L. Doctorow
7 P.M. Anthology Film Archives ($15)

Chang-rae Lee and Lorrie Moore
7 P.M. Satalla ($15)

A. M. Homes and Jeffrey Eugenides
9:30 P.M. Satalla ($15)

Edward P. Jones and Marilynne Robinson
9:30 P.M. Anthology Film Archives ($15)

Nicole Krauss and Ian McEwan
9:30 P.M. Angel Orensanz Foundation ($15)

Annie Proulx and Richard Ford
9:30 P.M. Newspace ($15)

Zadie Smith and Jonathan Franzen
9:30 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($15)

HIGH ROLLERS STEAK DINNER

Doyle Brunson, Phil Hellmuth, Jr., Howard Lederer, and David Williams talk with Kevin Conley
7 P.M. Gallagher's Steak House ($200)

THE NEW YORKER TOWN HALL MEETING ON IRAQ

7 P.M. Town Hall ($15)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

WRITERS AND THEIR SUBJECTS

Malcolm Gladwell on the American Obsession with Precociousness
10 A.M. Directors Guild of America ($25)

William Finnegan and Raymond W. Kelly
1 P.M. Times Square Studios ($25)

IN CONVERSATION WITH

Richard Dawkins interviewed by Henry Finder
10 A.M. Ailey Studios ($25)

Roger Angell and Ian Frazier interviewed by Mark Singer
1 P.M. Ailey Studios ($25)

Mikhail Baryshnikov interviewed by Joan Acocella
1 P.M. 37 Arts ($25)

John Updike interviewed by David Remnick
4 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum The New York Public Library ($25)

PANELS

When Reality Fails
10 A.M. Celeste Bartos Forum The New York Public Library ($25)

Advocacy Journalism
10 A.M. Florence Gould Hall French Institute Alliance Française ($25)

Religion and Politics
1 P.M. Celeste Bartos Forum The New York Public Library ($25)

Anarchy and Animation
1 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($25)

Rereading W. H. Auden
4 P.M. Florence Gould Hall French Institute Alliance Française ($25)

Stage to Studio
4 P.M. Times Square Studios ($25)

Generation X Fashion
4 P.M. Ailey Studios ($25)

EARLY SHIFT

Noah Baumbach and Laura Linney talk with Susan Morrison
7 P.M. Pavilion Park Slope ($20)

Tracy Chapman talks with Dana Goodyear: A Conversation with Music
7 P.M. Satalla ($35)

Tony Ellis, Earl Scruggs, Pete Wernick, and Charles Wood talk with Steve Martin: A Conversation with Music
7 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($35)

Edie Falco talks with Jeffrey Toobin
7 P.M. Coda ($35)

Sonny Rollins talks with Stanley Crouch
7 P.M. Ailey Studios ($35)

Sleater-Kinney talk with James Surowiecki: A Conversation with Music
7 P.M. Newspace ($35)

LATE SHIFT

Ricky Gervais talks with Nancy Franklin
10 P.M. Coda ($35)

The Roots talk with Malcolm Gladwell: A Conversation with Music
10 P.M. Newspace ($35)

Gillian Welch talk with Alec Wilkinson: A Conversation with Music
10 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($35)

Rufus Wainwright talks with Andy Young: A Conversation with Music
10 P.M. Satalla ($35)

Mike White talks with Cressida Leyshon
10 P.M. Film Forum ($20)

Cartoonists Unleashed: A Variety Show
10 P.M. Ailey Studios ($35)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

ABOUT TOWN

Secrets of a Hash Slinger
11 A.M. Galaxy Global Eatery ($40)

Come Hungry
11 A.M. The starting point will be indicated on the tickets. ($90)

Sunday Family Movie
1 P.M. Directors Guild of America ($5)

Nyuk, Nyuk, Nyuk: A Salute to the Three Stooges
2 P.M. Gallagher's Steak House ($45)

Sunday Matinée with David Denby
4 P.M. Directors Guild of America (Free)

MASTER CLASSES

Reporting: Jon Lee Anderson and Larissa MacFarquhar
10 A.M. Condé Nast Auditorium ($35)

The Graphic Novel: Charles Burns and Chris Ware
1 P.M. Condé Nast Auditorium ($35)

Fiction: Donald Antrim and Edward P. Jones
4 P.M. Condé Nast Auditorium ($35)

A HUMOR REVUE

3 P.M. Town Hall ($50)

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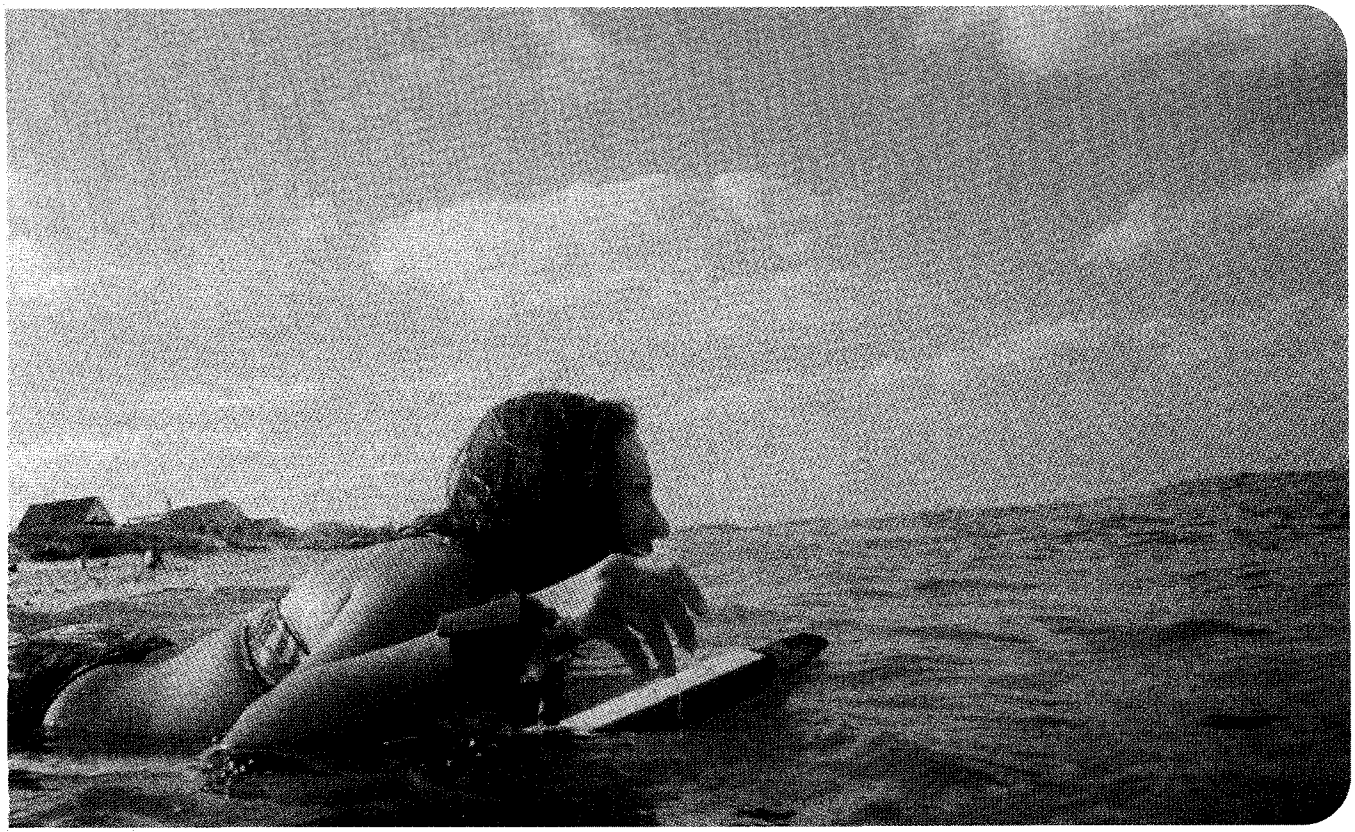
for not wearing shoes all week.



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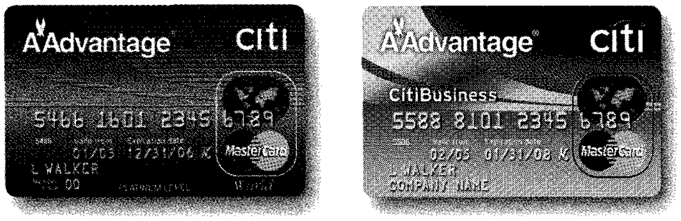

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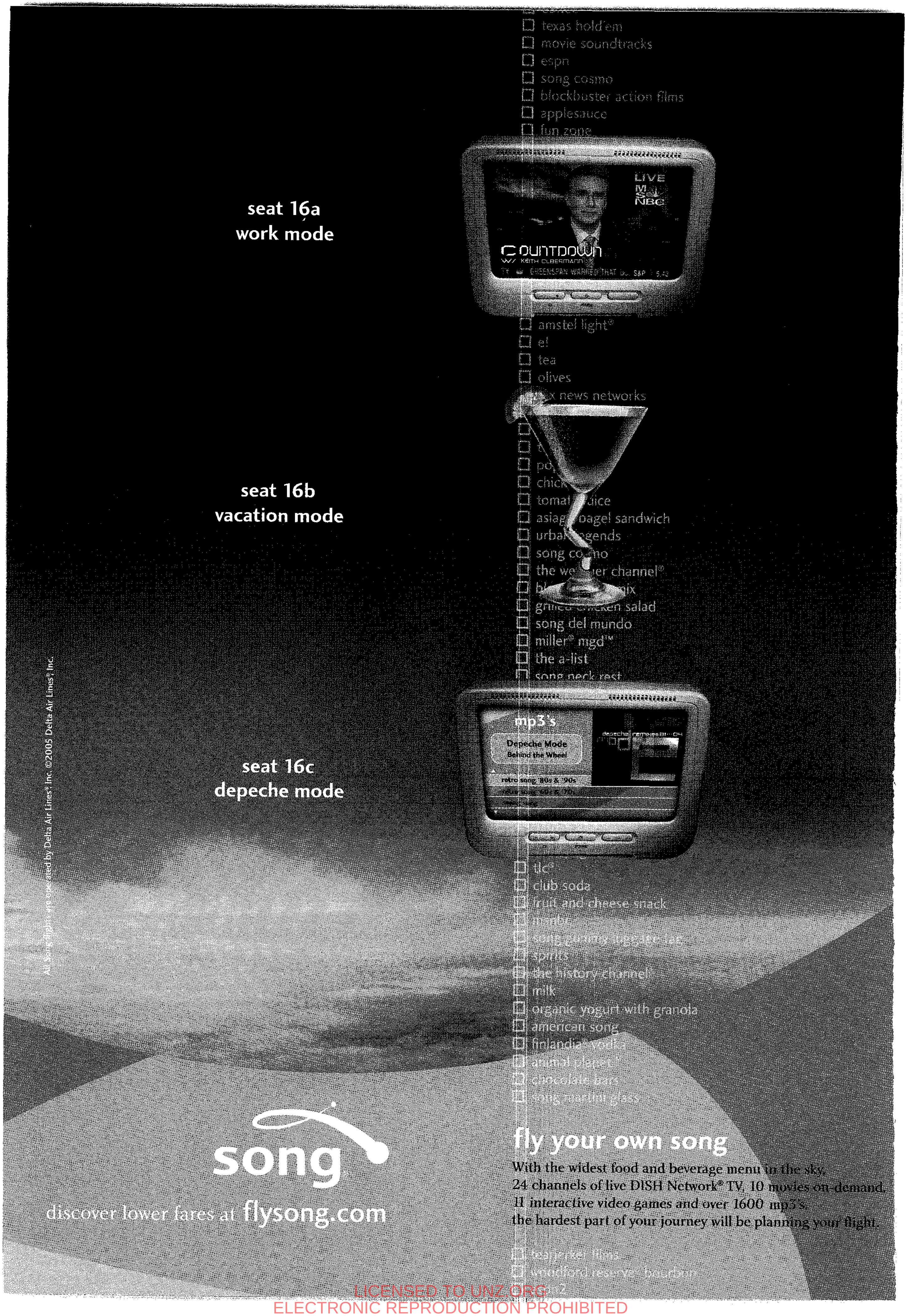
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had heart disease and diabetes, you didn't pay substantially more for coverage than a perfectly healthy twenty-five-year-old. Under social insurance, the twenty-five-year-old agrees to pay thousands of dollars in premiums even though he didn't go to the doctor at all in the previous year, because he wants to make sure that someone else will subsidize his health care if he ever comes down with heart disease or diabetes. Canada and Germany and Japan and all the other industrialized nations with universal health care follow the social-insurance model. Medicare, too, is based on the social-insurance model, and, when Americans with Medicare report themselves to be happier with virtually every aspect of their insurance coverage than people with private insurance (as they do, repeatedly and overwhelmingly), they are referring to the social aspect of their insurance. They aren't getting better care. But they are getting something just as valuable: the security of being insulated against the financial shock of serious illness.

There is another way to organize insurance, however, and that is to make it actuarial. Car insurance, for instance, is actuarial. How much you pay is in large part a function of your individual situation and history: someone who drives a sports car and has received twenty speeding tickets in the past two years pays a much higher annual premium than a soccer mom with a minivan. In recent years, the private insurance industry in the United States has been moving toward the actuarial model, with profound consequences. The triumph of the actuarial model over the social-insurance model is the reason that companies unlucky enough to employ older, high-cost employees—like United Airlines—have run into such financial difficulty. It's the reason that automakers are increasingly moving their operations to Canada. It's the reason that small businesses that have one or two employees with serious illnesses suddenly face unmanageably high health-insurance premiums, and it's the reason that, in many states, people suffering from a potentially high-cost medical condition can't get anyone to insure them at all.

Health Savings Accounts represent the final, irrevocable step in the actuarial direction. If you are preoccupied with moral hazard, then you want people to pay for care with their own money, and, when you do that, the sick inevitably end up paying more than the healthy. And when you make people choose an insurance plan that fits their individual needs, those with significant medical problems will choose expensive health plans that cover lots of things, while those with few health problems will choose cheaper, bare-bones plans. The more expensive the comprehensive plans become, and the less expensive the bare-bones plans become, the more the very sick will cluster together at one end of the insurance spectrum, and the more the well will cluster together at the low-cost end. The days when the healthy twenty-five-year-old subsidizes the sixty-year-old with heart disease or diabetes are coming to an end. "The main effect of putting more of it on the consumer is to reduce the social redistributive element of insurance," the Stanford economist Victor Fuchs says. Health Savings Accounts are not a variant of universal health care. In their governing assumptions, they are the antithesis of universal health care.

The issue about what to do with the health-care system is sometimes presented as a technical argument about the merits of one kind of coverage over another or as an ideological argument about socialized versus private medicine. It is, instead, about a few very simple questions. Do you think that this kind of redistribution of risk is a good idea? Do you think that people whose genes predispose them to depression or cancer, or whose poverty complicates asthma or diabetes, or who get hit by a drunk driver, or who have to keep their mouths closed because their teeth are rotting ought to bear a greater share of the costs of their health care than those of us who are lucky enough to escape such misfortunes? In the rest of the industrialized world, it is assumed that the more equally and widely the burdens of illness are shared, the better off the population as a whole is likely to be. The reason the United States has forty-five million people without coverage is that its health-care policy is in the hands of people who disagree, and who regard health insurance not as the solution but as the problem. ♦

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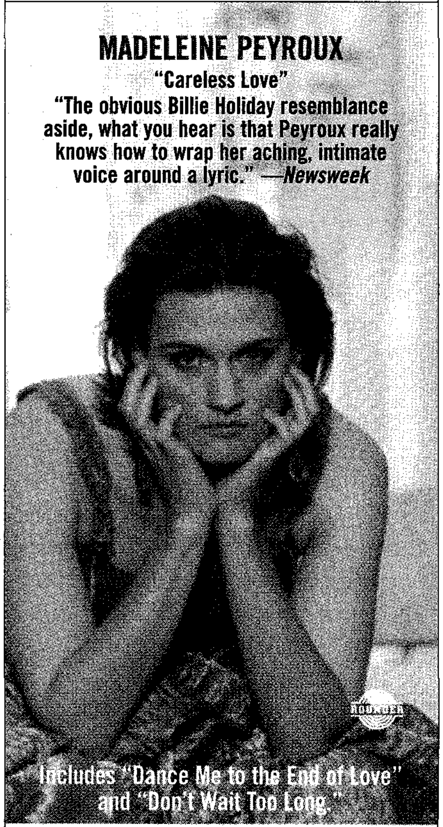

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LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA

THE SHROUD OF MARIN

Tyler Cassity and the new way of death.

BY TAD FRIEND

How much rest do the dead require? Late this spring, two experts were discussing burial theory over lunch at a Japanese restaurant in Mill Valley, California. The elder man, Ron Hast, had just visited Fernwood, a new “green” cemetery on the edge of town owned by the younger man, his friend and protégé Tyler Cassity. Hast is an avuncular fixture in the funeral industry. In his earlier days in Los Angeles, in the sixties and seventies, he invented the Casket Airtray, which enables corpses to fly home in style, and he ran a service that provided mortuaries with embalmers and pallbearers, men known for their navy-blue suits and perfect manners and prepossessing youth. When Marilyn Monroe and Gary Cooper and Clark Gable died, Hast’s men helped compose them for their final closeups. Now in semiretirement, at sixty-six, Hast edits and publishes the magazines *Mortuary Management* and *Funeral Monitor*.

In 2003, Hast had urged Cassity to buy Fernwood, a run-down thirty-two-acre cemetery and mortuary in the heart of Marin County. Cassity, who shows promise of having an even bigger effect on the American way of death than his mentor, did just that, and then spent one and a half million dollars transforming the property. At Fernwood, the dead would go into the ground unembalmed and in shrouds or wooden coffins rather than in the standard metal caskets packed inside concrete burial vaults. A simple rock, at most, would serve as a headstone, and grave sites would be planted with native grasses or oak trees that would be fertilized by the bodies below. In theory, the land would be indistinguishable from the forest that adjoins it, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Fernwood was not the first green burial facility in America—three others have opened in recent years—but it was intended to be the most ambitious, at once the prototype for a simple and virtuous method of burial that would force the fifteen-billion-dollar-a-year funeral industry to change its ways and a test of the revolutionary notion that cemeteries could conserve land. If Fernwood succeeded, Cassity hoped that environmental groups would buy large tracts of “buffer” land in conjunction with cemeterians like him, whose revenues from green burials on a portion of the property could be used to protect the rest.

Fernwood’s grand reopening isn’t until November, but dozens of people—from as far away as Oregon—have reserved “pre-need” plots, and the bodies or ashes of fifty-seven people are already in the ground. However, Hast had his doubts. When he dropped by the Fernwood office this spring, he was alarmed to see a mixed-breed dog named Owen slopping water out of a bowl, funeral directors kidding around, and one employee wearing what he termed “a hippie skirt.”

At the Japanese restaurant, Hast told Cassity that Fernwood was so laid back that he couldn’t, in good conscience, recommend it to his friends. As Cassity began to bridle, Hast made a placatory gesture and hurried on. (He and Cassity once had a heated argument about hearses—Hast insisted on traditional black Cadillacs; Cassity leased a black Volvo S.U.V. and silver and blue Priuses—and didn’t speak for months.) “Now you just listen, for once,” Hast said to Cassity. “In Australia last week, they started burying people in pastureland. They’re buried vertically, in a crouch.”

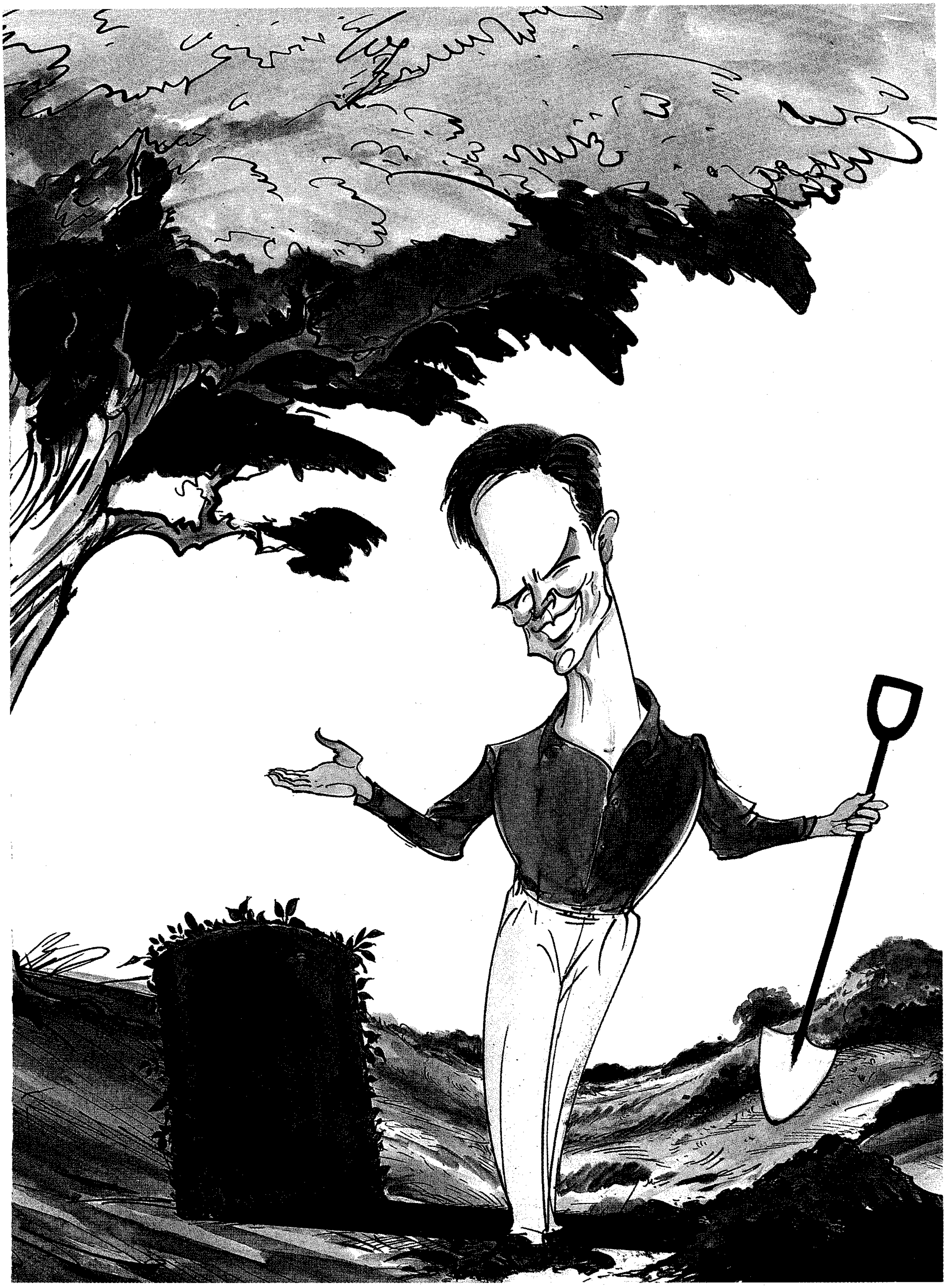
“We’d talked about that—” Cassity began.

“Yes, yes,” Hast interrupted. “The funeral directors I’ve mentioned it to all feel that the end of life is peaceful, which requires this”—he laid his chopsticks flat—“not that.” He popped them upright. “But crouching is something else entirely.”

Cassity agreed. “Crouching in the fe-

Besides “green burials,” Cassity has appro

GERALD SCARFE



can and Goth funerals and acceded to the wishes of a man who asked, when his time came, to be rolled up like a joint.

tal position would be nice—you go out the way you came in," he said. His voice is a velvety vibrato, like a leopard's purr. "Actually," he continued, "that could be a beautiful ceremony, like planting a seed. And because it would be less land use it gives us a two-thousand-dollar option." Within weeks, Cassity had commissioned papier-mâché shrouds in the shape of seedpods for crouching burial.

At thirty-five, Tyler Cassity is already renowned in the world of "death care," as the industry styles itself, for having transformed Hollywood Memorial Park, a bankrupt, tumbledown, sixty-two-acre cemetery where the graves of Cecil B. De Mille, Mel Blanc, and Douglas Fairbanks were covered with weeds, into the gleaming showpiece known as Hollywood Forever. Cassity and his family, which has built a death-based empire comprising five cemeteries and two pre-need insurance companies, bought the property in 1998 for three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. He spent two million dollars making it presentable. Then, he threw parties and screened films on the mausoleum wall and turned the cemetery into a kind of city commons. In 1997, the cemetery's revenues were sixteen thousand dollars; this year, they will exceed nine million.

Yet Cassity is acclaimed as more than just a restoration artist. If there is a radical memorialization idea out there, Cassity conceived it, has adopted it, or has already discarded it. (His notion of offering DNA samples of the dead, illuminated in a globe "like a drop of semen," as he put it to me, found only three takers.) Cassity's most influential innovation so far has been LifeStories, A&E-style video biographies of the deceased that are shown at the memorial service and are available in perpetuity on the Forever Web site.

Cassity, who resembles Robert Downey, Jr., stands out among his colleagues both for his delicacy and for his recklessness. He's a little like the stranger in a Western who rides into town just before the trouble starts. When he began renovating Fernwood last year, he had two partners: Dr. Billy Campbell, who opened the country's first green burial facility, in South Carolina, in 1998, and Joe Sehee, Cassity's longtime media consultant. But, by the time of the lunch with Ron Hast, neither one was speaking to him. There had been an ugly rupture, accusations of bad faith, lawyers. And yet his former collaborators missed him. "Tyler is handsome and wealthy and intelligent and compassionate—he's like being around a young J.F.K.," Sehee told me. "I wouldn't want anyone to go through what I did, but I don't know if I'd have done anything differently."

The challenge for cemeterians is to attract live patrons; after the so-called "season of death"—the three months following a burial—the average grave receives only two visits. Without visitors, a cemetery's cold geometry can suggest that death really is the end. This depresses sales. That is why Ron Hast told Cassity that he envisioned the crouching-burial site as a "romantic" spot: "There would be a rail fence you'd lean against with a name burned into the rails—John Jones—nothing about death, all about life." And, Hast added, "There'd be cows grazing."

"What do you think about the manure?" Cassity asked.

Hast squinted as he considered it. "No problem," he said at last. "A big heap of manure, it's natural."

"Good," Cassity said. "Because we're going to have sheep."

"Maybe we should try getting by with just one car."

After lunch, Cassity and Hast returned to Fernwood and sat in the sun-flooded chapel, which Cassity calls the Gathering Room. They were awaiting Richard Jongordon, who wanted to talk about green burial. Jongordon was another pioneer: in 1973, he started the Northern California chapter of the Neptune Society, the low-cost direct-cremation outfit that helped drive up the cremation rate in California from about five per cent at the time to fifty-one per cent today (the national average is thirty per cent). The motivations of those who choose direct cremation are complex—thrift, guilt about taking up any further space on earth, and a wish to be erased in a purifying fire—and although funeral directors sought to dismiss it as a squalid "bake and shake," it was the first serious challenge to the routines of modern death care.

Jongordon, a burly, affable man, arrived and settled into a chair. "I felt I was changing society," he said. "Because everyone was moving around so much, there was no longer a place where families wanted to be buried, generation after generation, and so we helped them out, a real benefit to people at two hundred and fifty-five dollars and no fuss." Then he explained about the lawsuits—the heaps of ashes piling up in the California hills; the families and their excitability about where, exactly, their relatives' remains were—that drove him from the business. He sighed. "But, anyway, here we are today with all this pre-selling, and I think it's wrong. It shouldn't just be all set so someone carts the body away in a van and that's it."

"Is that why you're here?" Cassity asked. "Guilt?" Jongordon shrugged, and Cassity nodded. He listens with the absorption of a therapist, and he is particularly curious about what motivates people to prefer one method of disposal over another. It appears that his deeper project, his emerging life's work, is to codify a new religion of departure—one that encompasses the struggle between the wish to become a meadow and the belief that nothing, not even a meadow, matters to the dead. Cassity has approved Wiccan and Goth funerals and a pre-need request for a monument in the shape of a giant prehistoric rat, and he acceded to the wishes of a man who asked, when his time came, to be rolled up in a shroud as if he were a joint.

Jongordon said that he'd just invested in a funeral home and burial ground in Colton, east of Los Angeles. "What I'd like to do," he said, "is take five acres, plant fruit trees, do direct burial, and put a wall around it with the names on it." The cost of the average American funeral and burial can exceed ten thousand dollars, but Jongordon said that he planned to charge only about fifteen hundred dollars for a "simple burial and wooden box."

"Or a shroud? The way the Jews do it?" Cassity suggested.

"No shroud; a box," Jongordon said. "It's an emotional factor. The box looks better going in."

"And what about pets?" Ron Hast interjected.

"Nothing wrong with that," Jongordon said. "When the pet dies, you lower it down in a little box on top of the master's box."

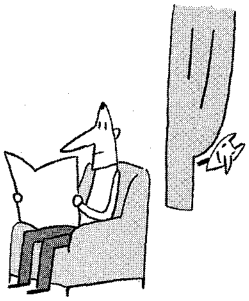
"You don't euthanize the pet at the master's death?" Hast asked, frowning.

"Personally, my wife would be unhappy," Jongordon said. "She loves our dog."

"And you, Richard?" Cassity said. "What do you want done with you?"

"I don't even care," Jongordon said. "Take me to the dump."

In death, our bodies, never entirely reliable to begin with, disobey us completely. Or, perhaps more accurately, they disobey those whom we leave behind. As Mary Roach terms the stages of repulsiveness in "Stiff: The Curious Lives of Human Cadavers," first comes "fresh" (the skin sloughs off the body in sheets); then "bloat" (the body cavity swells with gas generated by bacteria); and, finally, "putrefaction and decay" (the organs liquefy; the brain bubbles out of the mouth and the ears). The collapse of our physical housing in death has long impelled us to construct substitutes, out of sturdier material. Many of the ancient world's wonders—the Ming Tombs, the Pyramids, the Taj Mahal—were attempts to grandly preserve the body or, at least, the memory of its former inhabitant. The most expensive quarters in a modern American cemetery are private mausoleums that offer exclusivity, proximity to water, and a view—attractions that encourage the belief that the dead can still, in some manner, appreciate their surroundings. The Corinthian metal burial vault, for instance, is advertised as being "built to withstand whatever time and nature can deliver. . . . You'll have the comfort of knowing your loved one will truly rest in peace."



Embalming, which is now primarily an American habit, forestalls putrefaction for about a week. It came into use during the Civil War, as a way to preserve dead soldiers for shipment home (at thirty dollars for an enlisted man and eighty for an officer); it gained wider acceptance when at least a million people viewed Abraham Lincoln's embalmed body as his funeral train proceeded from Washington, D.C., to Springfield, Illinois.

A turning point for funeral directors occurred in 1926, when the silent-film star Rudolph Valentino died unexpectedly at thirty-one, while in New York on a publicity tour. Frank E. Campbell, a local mortician, hired mourners, and a crowd stormed his funeral home, crying out to see the actor's preserved body. By then, funeral directors were recognized as adepts who could compose a corpse for the "final look," also known as the "memory picture." The trocar, the sharpened rod that morticians use to pierce the body cavity and begin the embalming process, had become a kind of wizard's staff.

Green-burial proponents hold that our bodies don't disobey us in death so much as they obey the dictates of time and nature. In this view, in which embalming is seen as ridiculous, you don't really need funeral directors. Perhaps it's unsurprising, then, that most of the funeral directors and cemeterians I spoke with dismissed green burial as a niche product that's fine for California but not for anyplace normal. "There is something very sacred and tranquil about fields of stone, about Arlington or Normandy," Bob Biggins, the president-elect of the National Funeral Directors Association, told me.

Tyler Cassity is an impresario of the drama of daily life. At a staff meeting one May morning in Hollywood Forever's office, a former Masonic Lodge, he explained to his employees that his vice-president and close friend, Andy Martinez, had resigned. "We had a personal falling out about jazz which caused me to lose my temper," Cassity said cryptically, "and when I lose my temper it's very destructive." He bowed his head in contrition. His assistant, Samantha Tibbs, has quit six times, and he likes hiring former sex workers and down-on-their-luck porn stars. "The way it works," Cassity told me, "is I have a place, I put people in it, and then I tweak and modify, seeing how people respond. It's very much like a zoo or a terrarium."

On another morning that week, Cassity strolled through Hollywood Forever's Russian section, glossing the graves: "Cancer"; "Kidnapping"; "Private plane." He drained a Diet Rockstar energy drink; the previous evening, at a Russian bath, he had drunk half a bottle of Absolut vodka and been beaten with eucalyptus branches and, at some point, forgotten where he left his car. Cassity often misplaces his car or his keys or his cell phone. Though he is worth about fifteen million dollars, his wallet, too, often slips away.

Cassity sees himself as the dead's envoy. (He has twice, in a parking lot and on a tennis court, felt peculiarly agitated, made inquiries, and learned that Indian burial grounds lay beneath.) And he carries a torch for his own doom. He drives erratically, with his knees, while on his cell phone; smokes a pack of Camel Lights a day; forgets to take his Zoloft; passes out in the Jacuzzi. The little finger on his right hand is curled up from a misadventure chopping ice for margaritas with a hatchet. "It's wonderful—a drink holder, a lighter holder, and I don't spill as much," he told me, holding his pinkie aloft as if it were a gizmo from Sharper Image. He often broods over Valentino's crypt, one of Hollywood Forever's leading attractions (Valentino's body went by train to Hollywood, attracting Lincolnesque throngs en route). "People who die young, like Valentino, have overflow crowds," Cassity said. "If you win longevity, no one attends your funeral."

In front of Cassity, abutting the southern edge of the property, was Paramount Pictures Studio. Behind him, high on the hill, framed by the cemetery's front gates, was the "Hollywood" sign. Occasionally, the funerals at Hollywood Forever are studio productions, staged for the HBO funeral-home drama, "Six Feet Under." Cassity is a consultant for the show, and has provided it with story lines from his own experience, from Buddhist funerals to blood spewing from the embalming-room drains. When Cassity told the show's writers about his new cemetery in Marin, they decided that when the main character, Nate, died, at the end of this, the final season, he would receive a green burial. "Tyler has affected the tone of the show, more than anything else," Alan Ball, the creator of "Six Feet Under," said. "There's this amalgamation of sadness and loss and regret, the hopefulness on top of that, his soulfulness, his soft voice. Everybody in the writers' room has a huge crush on him: men, women, gay, straight—after he comes in we all go, 'Mmm!'"

Hollywood Forever is an idyllic panorama of mowed grass and white roses, cypress and olive and palm trees, and four types of jasmine, whose perfume evoked all the mournful promise of the City of Angels. Peacocks, a symbol of immortality, strutted about the grounds. A black Rolls-Royce hearse hulked in the shade. None of those plant or animal or automotive species are indigenous in the way that the lube shops and homeless people just outside the walls are, and Cassity said, "It's a reproduction that becomes an original. It's a reproduction of a movie version of L.A., but people come here to see what the city is like."

Cassity borrowed the tenor of his simulated originality from Hubert Eaton, the founder of Forest Lawn Memorial-Park, in nearby Glendale. Beginning in 1917, Eaton created the modern memorial park, with grave markers that lay flush with the grass—permitting unhindered vistas and easy maintenance—and filled it with copies of famous art works that he had modified and improved. He had Leonardo's "Last Supper" done up in fade-proof stained glass, and he added to his replica of a sombre Buckinghamshire church an optimistic fillip: singing canaries. In the nineteen-fifties, Forest Lawn was one of California's top five tourist attractions.

"Eaton's vision is very 'Ten Commandments,'" Cassity observed on a recent visit to Forest Lawn. "The creators of the film industry were doing exactly this at the same time." Cassity admired how Eaton had placed statues of two moppets and a dog near a nude sculpture of the Three Graces. "If you want to attract people, get kids and a dog," he said. "And the pornographic threesome is another crowd-pleaser. Like Cecil B. De Mille, Eaton understood that you could show nudity if you're doing something pious."

Hollywood Forever's reliance on the lure of stardom exceeds even Forest Lawn's. Johnny and Dee Dee Ramone recently chose it as their final resting place (though Johnny's wife is still holding on to his ashes), and the sight of Johnny's blackened-bronze statue banging out a power chord helped persuade others to buy fifty-thousand-dollar plots in the nearby Garden of the Legends. (It also persuaded a conservative Filipino-American family to move their plot across the lake.) Ramone's memorial is off the newly christened Nelson Eddy Drive; Eddy's fan club paid thirty thousand dollars for the naming rights. "Selling streets was my brother's idea," Cassity said, referring to his older brother, Brent, the C.E.O. of the family business. "And I thought it was stupid. Now I just wish we had charged more—turns out everyone wants a street." Celebrities are a cemetery's anchor tenants; they bolster, by their continuing fame, the hope of an eternal life. Early on, Cassity sought to take Jim Morrison off the hands of the Père-Lachaise cemetery, in Paris. That effort failed, but he did acquire the ashes of Ann Sheridan, who starred opposite Ronald Reagan in "Kings Row."

It was never Cassity's intent simply to refurbish cemeteries. In a talk at a 1997 International Cemetery and Funeral Association conference, he and his technology chief, Jay Boileau, startled the audience by announcing that they were going to turn an outmoded industry upside down. "We want to be the Microsoft of cemeteries, not the hardware of stone but the software of memory," Cassity said. Boileau free-associated about the value of creating an archive of memories in outer space, because "I'd like to have alien races be able to come along and see what we did."

Cassity seems to relish gazing out into a sea of bewildered faces. At one point, after I had asked to see some of his speeches, he gathered a stack of file cards and then accidentally left them on the roof of his assistant's car as they drove off. Later, I saw a few cards by the curb, and we gathered the rain-soaked talking points that remained: "Television + Film—Modern Cathedrals"; "Cemetery—a library of bodies catalogued by name and date." Cassity declined to arrange the cards more than wind and rain and chance already had: "Much better this way, I think. Don't you?"

As a boy in Springfield, Missouri, James Tyler Cassity grew up in a family from central casting—charismatic, with gleaming teeth, ideally American. Tyler's parents, Doug and Rhonda, were born-again Baptists, but one of his forebears had been a young Chinese girl and another a Cherokee. "I'm assuming they were both raped," he said.

At the age of three, Cassity was given a duckling for Easter. "It wasn't behaving," he said, "so at one point I was trying to catch it and I closed its neck in the door." After the accidental beheading, he said, "I began petting it, seeming not at all upset, as it was now behaving." When

"Here's a song I wrote about a guy who gets falsely accused of trying to rob a liquor store."

• •

Brent began taking violin lessons, Tyler listened to the screeching for three days, and then grabbed the violin and smashed it over Brent's head. The family tells these stories indulgently.

Tyler's mother made a career of buying ever-larger houses, refurbishing them, and flipping them. Her husband made his money in real estate, and was a millionaire before he was thirty. Later, he would expand into pre-need funeral insurance. Bill Obrock, a childhood friend of Cassity's, told me, "Tyler lives in the shadow of his father's ability to turn everything he touches into gold." Cassity said, "I believe in the Oedipus complex, and my sense of the family was three men competing for the love of the beautiful woman on the pedestal, my mother."

As a child, Tyler often hid a running tape recorder in a room to learn what the adults were saying. When he was thirteen, he found a tape he'd made two years earlier of his grandmother Jeannie, who had since died, laughing and smoking and chatting with his mother. He ran down to the breakfast table with his big idea. As Doug Cassity recalls, "Tyler played the tape and said, 'You guys sell stuff that's worthless—insurance policies for six to ten thousand dollars that cover a piece of ground and a stone. This three-minute cassette is worth more than that.' I was just trying to make money, and he was already trying to revolutionize death."

In high school, Tyler was an All Division defensive end with no great interest in football or the girls who came with it. At sixteen, tormented by a forbidden crush on his best friend, he tried to kill himself by swallowing all sixty pills in the family medicine cabinet. When he was a freshman at Columbia University, he came out. His mother was devastated; his father was bewildered. "I'm a farm boy from southwest Missouri, and I had looked at gayness as a choice, because that's what my religion said," Doug Cassity told me. He immersed himself in medical and psychological studies, "and it became obvious that it wasn't a religious or moral issue."

"It had a big effect on my family," Tyler said quietly. "My parents changed from being Baptist to being spiritual."

After majoring in English at Columbia, and briefly pursuing a dream of becoming a famous novelist—he wrote a number of short stories about mortuaries—Cassity decided to go into the family business. He developed LifeStories at the family's cemeteries, which Brent was running, and then he and Brent travelled around the country, trying to market the idea. The brothers had spectacular fights. (After a dispute about President Bush, they didn't speak for six months.) "The best and worst thing about working with your brother," Brent Cassity said, "is you can't fire him." It was after one of these fraught sibling trips, in 1997, that Tyler, on his way to the Los Angeles airport, stopped to look at Hollywood Memorial Park, which was for sale, and realized, suddenly, that he wasn't a funeral-products salesman: he was a cemeterian.

Tyler Cassity's tutor in green burial was Billy Campbell, the only physician in Westminster, South Carolina. Campbell, who is forty-nine, is a skinny pinwheel of world-changing ideas—he was a river guide before he became a doctor and an environmentalist. He wears rimless glasses and a gold hoop earring and has the self-reliant air of someone who lived alone in a solar-powered shack until he met his future wife, Kimberley, and she hinted that the wasteful, self-indulgent technology known as air-conditioning might not be all bad.

Campbell didn't originate green burial; credit usually goes to Nicholas Albery, a psychotherapist who began orchestrating "woodland burials" in England in 1994. But, six years before that, Campbell had written an article in a regional magazine which espoused a broader vision. It recounted an epiphany he'd had when he read the book "Kuru Sorcery," which described how the Fore people of New Guinea set aside sacred groves for the dead. Campbell suddenly realized that burying people in a simple way in the wilderness—America's sacred groves—would be a means to preserve open space and to give families a stake in the land. Such burials would leave the environment relatively undisturbed; you wouldn't be interring each body with three gallons of toxic formaldehyde and mercuric chloride, as well as concrete, steel, and tropical hardwoods, or using energy-intensive crematories that fill the air with particles.

In 1996, Campbell established Memorial Ecosystems, with a thirty-year goal of using green burial to save a million acres. Two years later—the year that Tyler Cassity took over Hollywood Memorial Park—the Campbells began conducting green burials at Ramsey Creek Preserve, a wooded thirty-three-acre plot they own just outside Westminster. They charge twenty-one hundred and fifty dollars for a burial—fifty dollars more if they hit a rock. In seven years, Campbell has buried just fifty people, only four of them his patients—a group who seem leery of the one-stop-shopping implications of his second career.

One Sunday in April, Campbell invited me to visit: "We've got a couple people who are hot right now"—close to death—"so you might get to see a burial." The following afternoon, there was a service at Ramsey Creek for Anna Palmer, a seventy-eight-year-old former nurse. Palmer, who was dressed in a white sun hat and white gloves and tucked up with a patchwork quilt, lay in a cardboard box beside her freshly dug grave at the edge of a clearing.

A Baptist minister, David Blizzard, addressed the three dozen mourners. He looked around uncertainly, clasping a small Bible, and widened his stance. "This is kind of a unique funeral," he began, "the first one I've had this way, out here in beautiful creation. It reminds us that where there is a creation, there is a creator. Thank God I didn't descend from no monkey." There were murmurs of "Amen," and Campbell's expression became studiously neutral.

"I've begun to suspect that my agent is a double agent."

Palmer's family lowered her into the ground. Susan Grant, Palmer's daughter, looked on calmly as Campbell eased a spadeful of reddish earth onto her mother's head. ("It's only an empty body," he said later. "But still . . .") After the Campbells had mounded the grave and planted it with wildflowers, they took me into the forest. "See all those ferns?" Billy said. "That's Jah from California."

Having observed that England's early woodland burials had come to resemble tree farms—the trees were too ordered and close together—Campbell had spaced his graves, and saplings, according to what he called "an informed stochastacy," a randomness intended to mimic nature's clumpings. So his graveyard was almost indistinguishable from any other oak-and-pine forest. "In the woods, after a while," he said, "all that's left of a body is a dark spot and a few teeth."

A Swedish biologist, Susanne Wiigh-Masak, told me that the process of decay was more complicated. "In the old days, we were torn apart by animals and spread around and became soil, but without using animals a whole body is too big to mulch—it starts to rot because of a lack of oxygen in the body," she said. Wiigh-Masak's solution, which the Swedish town of Jönköping is going to try this fall, is to freeze-dry bodies in liquid nitrogen and then shatter them into what she calls a "pinkish, hygienic, dried organic powder" that will serve as compost to nurture a freshly planted shrub or tree. "By reducing the body to millimetre-size pieces, you make it not recognizably human, and you take away the fear of what happens to it," Wiigh-Masak told me. "It makes death appealing. And so I feel very calm in knowing that I will be a rhododendron when I grow up."

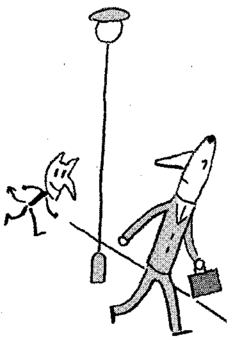
In January, 2003, Tyler Cassity and his media consultant, Joe Sehee, flew to South Carolina from Los Angeles to discuss green burial with Billy Campbell. Cassity says that he learned about Ramsey Creek on the Internet after having a flash of insight while swinging in his hammock and staring at an elm: cemeteries can save land.

Sehee says that pursuing Campbell was his idea. Sehee, a restless forty-four-year-old with a monkish scruff of hair, has had an eclectic career, with stints as a Jesuit lay minister, a Peabody Award-winning journalist (for "Dateline NBC"), an advocate for affordable housing, a creative consultant at I.B.M., and a rollerblading lounge singer. He began working with Cassity in 1999, and helped to generate numerous articles about Cassity and Hollywood Forever—"the most successful death-care media campaign in the last decade," Sehee told me. In June, 2002, he and his wife bought a home in Joshua Tree, California, and the sere landscape there gave him the idea of holding desert retreats where people would learn to "befriend" death. He also began to look into ways to conserve the land. These projects, he said, led him to discover on the Internet what Billy Campbell had done and to suggest to Cassity that they should all meet.

When Cassity and Sehee arrived in South Carolina on that January weekend, they walked the frozen ground at Ramsey Creek and talked with the Campbells late into the night. Campbell and Sehee found that they were equally passionate about saving land, and that Sehee could recast Campbell's knottier ideas into punchy slogans. "Joe can just about be me at this point," Campbell said. He added, "I was immediately taken with Tyler, and Kimberley adored him."

The three men decided to work together to create "memorial landscapes." Campbell recalls, "I'd be chief environmental officer, Joe was going to do the marketing and putting people together, and Tyler was going to be finance and creativity and devil's advocate." They were confident that green-burial customers, who leave no mark in stone, would want to buy a LifeStory. (Though LifeStories had made Cassity famous in the industry, they had never actually made him or his family any money, because the Cassitys had had to repeatedly invest in the latest editing technology to distinguish their product from the sort of slideshow teen-agers could put together on their PCs.) The partners fanned out, talking to environmentalists and financiers, intending to do nothing less than revolutionize environmentalism and the funeral industry.

In March of 2003, when Ron Hast called Cassity and told him that Fernwood was for sale, it seemed to Cassity and the others to be the perfect place to test the green-burial idea. For one thing, Fernwood was already zoned as a cemetery. (Because of neighborhood resistance, only about three municipal cemeteries are approved each year, nationwide.) Not only is seventy per cent of Marin County already protected land; the county's cremation rate is an astounding eighty per cent, and people who cremate are presumed to be open to other nontraditional forms of disposition. Marin is also a stronghold of hospice care and of home funerals, in which the deceased's family or a "death midwife" washes and clothes the body. Furthermore, Jessica Mitford, who wrote "The American Way of Death," the 1963 book that convinced many Americans that funeral directors are smooth-talking swindlers, had lived in nearby Oakland. "This is Mitford land around here," Cassity told me. "We benefit from that suspicion."



And so Cassity found another cemetery bargain—five years after buying Hollywood Forever, he paid four hundred and ninety-five thousand dollars for Fernwood. He eventually offered Campbell and Sehee ten per cent of the new cemetery's revenues, explaining that he was putting up the money and taking the risk, and that Fernwood might not show a profit for several years; they both agreed that the proposal was basically fair, but they couldn't get Cassity to finalize the details or focus on how their management company would be structured to handle future projects. (Cassity said that Sehee and Campbell were responsible for the delay.) Cassity also slept through or skipped meetings with potential investors, and at times spoke blithely about abandoning the partnership and returning to writing fiction, his first love.

As time passed, Campbell and Sehee—who moved from Joshua Tree to Marin to work on Fernwood—began to worry that, despite Cassity's assurances, they would find themselves working for the Cassity family empire. And Cassity increasingly fretted that the others were trading on his wealth and renown. He was also annoyed by Campbell's name for the partnership, Memeco, a truncation of Memorial Ecosystems. Memeco, Cassity wrote Sehee, sounded like a "little Japanese schoolgirl tart." He later joked that it should be called Mememeco. As early as his first visit to Ramsey Creek, Cassity told Sehee, "I'm here to learn from Billy, but he's not really necessary to do this with." He later told Sehee that Campbell "would be the perfect face for us—a physician with a stethoscope standing in the forest. He's our Colonel Sanders."

Cassity repeated this remark to Campbell. "I found it a little offensive that I was just being included as Colonel Sanders to send a better message than Tyler's message of 'innovative cemetery guy,'" Campbell said.

In early 2004, a few months before Cassity was to take possession of Fernwood, the partners had discussions with the Trust for Public Land. They were hoping that T.P.L. would agree to hold a conservation easement on the land, thereby giving the project both credibility and transparency. (An easement's holder has no rights to use the property, but can restrict development or mandate ecological restoration according to rules established in the easement contract.) Ernest Cook, a senior vice-president at T.P.L., says, "It was a conceptually marvellous idea, but we didn't move forward, because the team at Fernwood was not together on what the easement would allow—fifty people buried per acre? Five hundred? Would it require the eucalyptus trees to all come out?" The trees are not indigenous to California. "There was a lot to be worked out between the three partners."

The differences were as much philosophical as personal. Campbell and Sehee viewed their prospective properties as nature preserves that would host burials; Cassity was a cemeterian who saw the land as an inspiring and potentially lucrative twist on the memorial park. "Tyler once asked me if I'd rather make a million dollars and save a million acres, or make twenty million dollars and save twenty thousand acres," Campbell said. (Cassity does not recall this.) "I said I'd rather save the million acres, of course. I'm not sure it was the right answer."

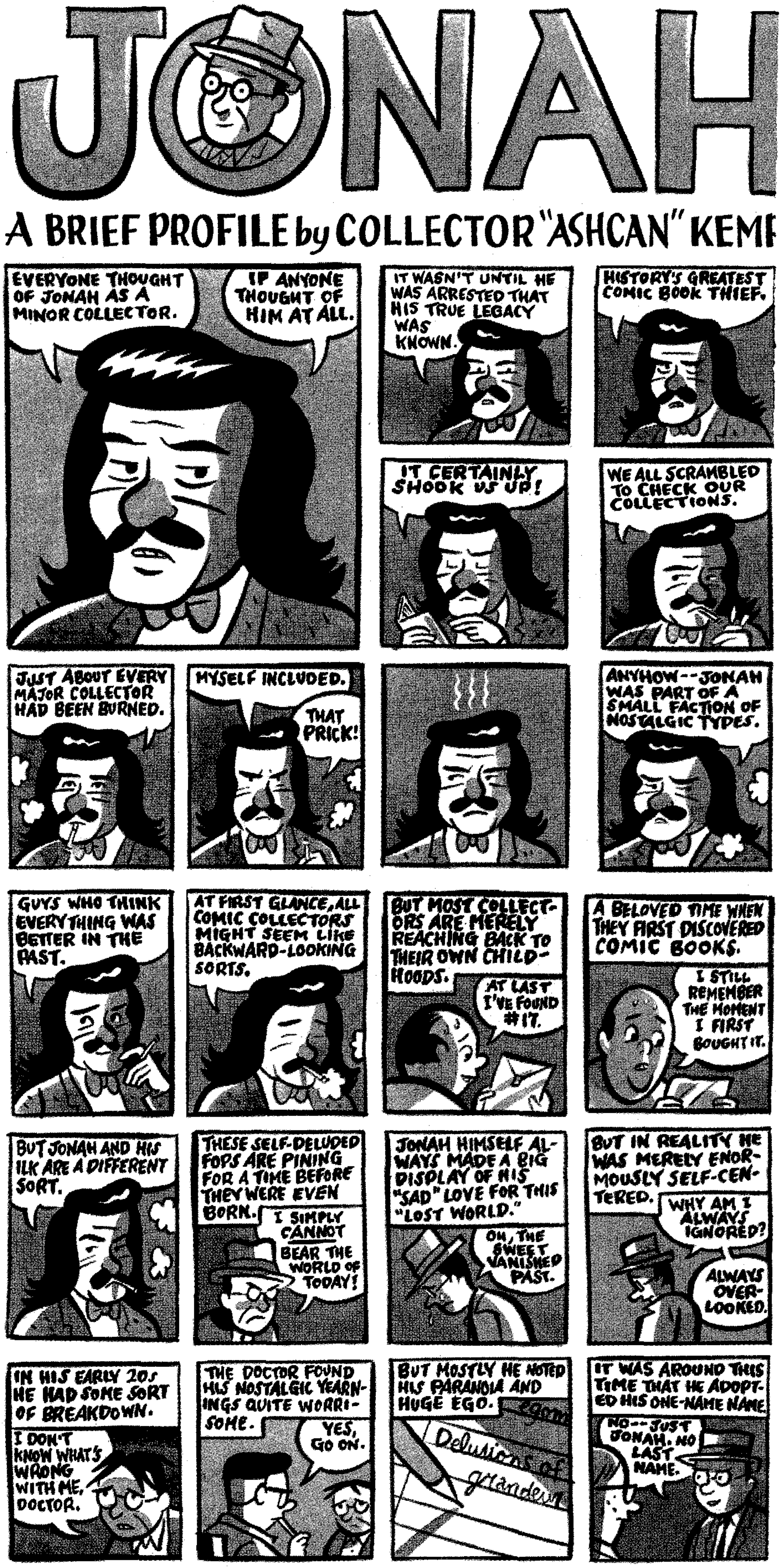
One Saturday afternoon this spring, Cassity and Aurora Mahassine, an ecologist at an environmental-design firm in Carmel Valley, set out to walk the Fernwood property. They were considering its ecological needs, including how best to remove invasive Australian eucalyptus and restore the hillside to the way it was before the gold rush. Mahassine, a free-spirited woman with cascades of auburn hair who lives in the woods, has often explained to Cassity that green burial won't be green the way a heavily watered cemetery lawn is, that nature has its seasons of decadence and death.

As they walked, Cassity began to discuss Roy Armanini, a sixty-six-year-old gravedigger with a pronounced limp whom he had acquired with the cemetery. Mahassine said that Armanini had recently sneaked up behind her when she was standing on a culvert and whispered, "I could push you right now and you'd be dead."

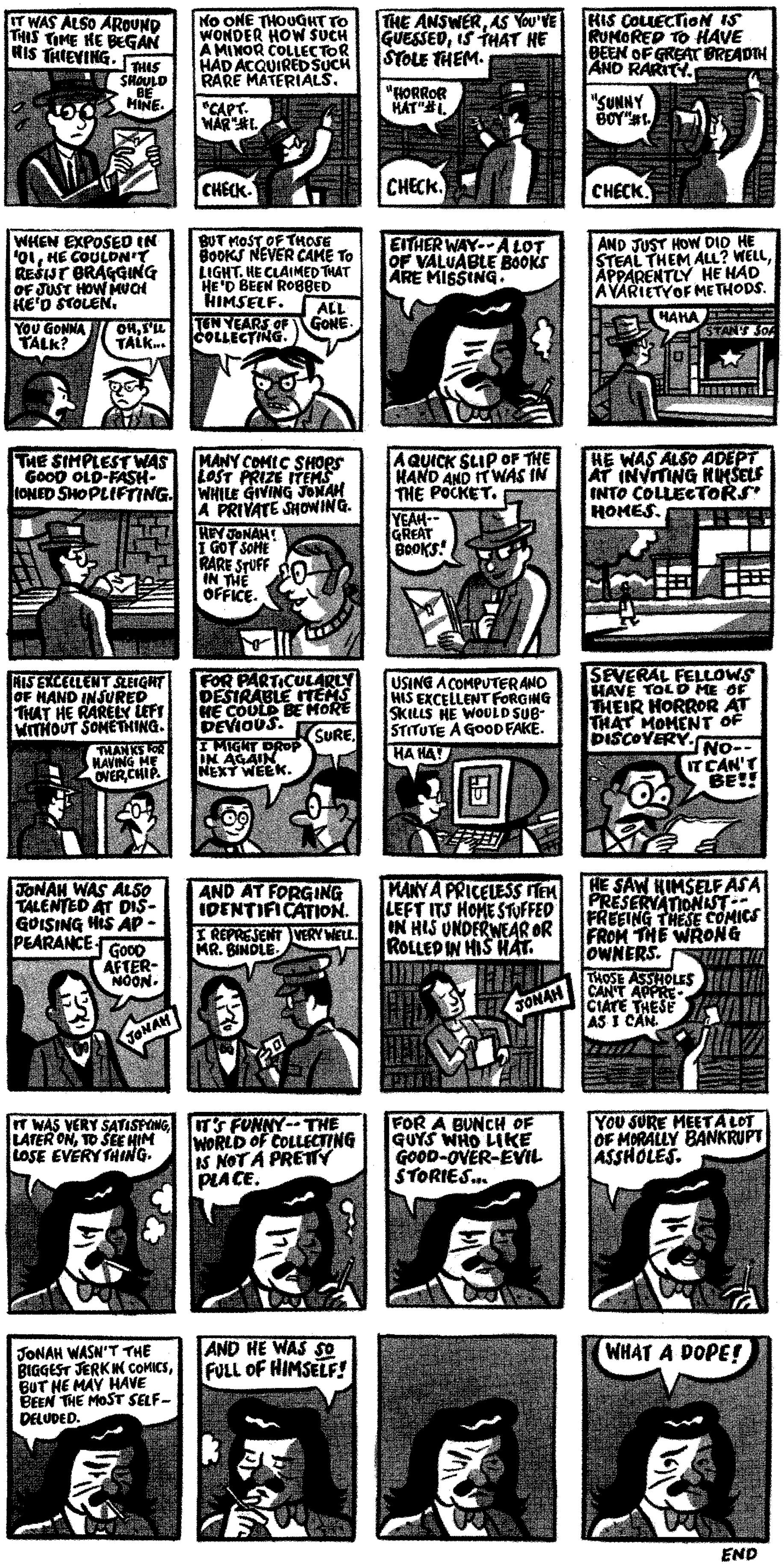
"I'm worried that Roy has gone from being cool creepy to creepy creepy," Cassity said. "When you told me your story, I said to him, 'What's this about killing people, Roy?' and he said, 'Who have you been talking to? It was an accident!' But I might take him with me to Hollywood—he'd be a perfect star for a cemetery."

"Yes, Roy needs to be seen carrying around a shovel, but in the distance," Mahassine said.

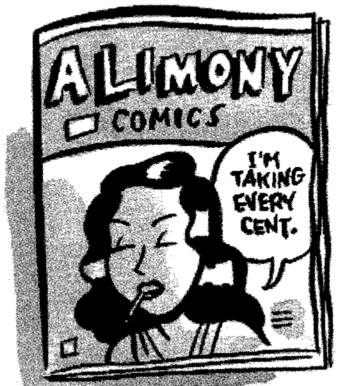
One night last August, Mahassine accompanied Cassity to his hotel, the Acqua, to throw his Tarot cards. The cards foretold that he was about to face his judgment. Disturbed by this augury, Cassity took an Ambien to knock himself out. When he awoke, smoke was everywhere, and Mahassine was screaming. After they'd gone to sleep, the candle she'd left in the ice bucket had set a nearby silk-covered chair on fire. Cassity recalled, "I found myself outside in a cashmere sweater and my underwear, filled with tremendous humiliation." He paid nineteen thousand dollars for the damage, and, having been banned from the Acqua, he tried to expiate his sin by staying at twelve other hotels in the same chain. He also began calling Mahassine Sparky, a name she didn't much like.


JONAH
A BRIEF PROFILE by COLLECTOR "ASHCAN" KEMI
EVERYONE THOUGHT OF JONAH AS A MINOR COLLECTOR.
IF ANYONE THOUGHT OF HIM AT ALL.
IT WASN'T UNTIL HE WAS ARRESTED THAT HIS TRUE LEGACY WAS KNOWN.
HISTORY'S GREATEST COMIC BOOK THIEF.
IT CERTAINLY SHOOK US UP!
WE ALL SCRAMBLED TO CHECK OUR COLLECTIONS.
JUST ABOUT EVERY MAJOR COLLECTOR HAD BEEN BURNED.
MYSELF INCLUDED.
THAT PRICK!
ANYHOW--JONAH WAS PART OF A SMALL FACTION OF NOSTALGIC TYPES.
GUYS WHO THINK EVERYTHING WAS BETTER IN THE PAST.
AT FIRST GLANCE, ALL COMIC COLLECTORS MIGHT SEEM LIKE BACKWARD-LOOKING SORTS.
BUT MOST COLLECTORS ARE MERELY REACHING BACK TO THEIR OWN CHILDHOODS.
AT LAST I'VE FOUND #17.
A BELOVED TIME WHEN THEY FIRST DISCOVERED COMIC BOOKS.
I STILL REMEMBER THE MOMENT I FIRST BOUGHT IT.
BUT JONAH AND HIS ILK ARE A DIFFERENT SORT.
THESE SELF-DELUDED FOPS ARE PINING FOR A TIME BEFORE THEY WERE EVEN BORN.
I SIMPLY CANNOT BEAR THE WORLD OF TODAY!
JONAH HIMSELF ALWAYS MADE A BIG DISPLAY OF HIS "SAD" LOVE FOR THIS "LOST WORLD."
OH, THE SWEET VANISHED PAST.
BUT IN REALITY HE WAS MERELY ENORMOUSLY SELF-CENTERED.
WHY AM I ALWAYS IGNORED?
ALWAYS OVERLOOKED.
IN HIS EARLY 20s HE HAD SOME SORT OF BREAKDOWN.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S WRONG WITH ME, DOCTOR.
THE DOCTOR FOUND HIS NOSTALGIC YEARNINGS QUITE WORRISOME.
YES, GO ON.
BUT MOSTLY HE NOTED HIS PARANOIA AND HUGE EGO.
egom
Delusions of grandeur
IT WAS AROUND THIS TIME THAT HE ADOPTED HIS ONE-NAME NAME.
NO--JUST JONAH. NO LAST NAME.

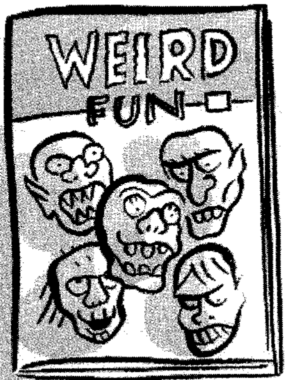
SETH


IT WAS ALSO AROUND THIS TIME HE BEGAN HIS THIEVING.
THIS SHOULD BE MINE.
NO ONE THOUGHT TO WONDER HOW SUCH A MINOR COLLECTOR HAD ACQUIRED SUCH RARE MATERIALS.
"CAPT. WAR" #1.
CHECK.
THE ANSWER, AS YOU'VE GUESSED, IS THAT HE STOLE THEM.
"HORROR HAT" #1.
CHECK.
HIS COLLECTION IS RUMORED TO HAVE BEEN OF GREAT BREADTH AND RARITY.
"SUNNY BOY" #1.
CHECK.
WHEN EXPOSED IN '01, HE COULDN'T RESIST BRAGGING OF JUST HOW MUCH HE'D STOLEN.
YOU GONNA TALK?
OH, I'LL TALK...
BUT MOST OF THOSE BOOKS NEVER CAME TO LIGHT. HE CLAIMED THAT HE'D BEEN ROBBED HIMSELF.
ALL GONE.
TEN YEARS OF COLLECTING.
EITHER WAY-- A LOT OF VALUABLE BOOKS ARE MISSING.
AND JUST HOW DID HE STEAL THEM ALL? WELL, APPARENTLY HE HAD A VARIETY OF METHODS.
HAHA
STAN'S SOA
THE SIMPLEST WAS GOOD OLD-FASHIONED SHOPLIFTING.
MANY COMIC SHOPS LOST PRIZE ITEMS WHILE GIVING JONAH A PRIVATE SHOWING.
HEY JONAH! I GOT SOME RARE STUFF IN THE OFFICE.
A QUICK SLIP OF THE HAND AND IT WAS IN THE POCKET.
YEAH-- GREAT BOOKS!
HE WAS ALSO ADEPT AT INVITING HIMSELF INTO COLLECTORS' HOMES.
HIS EXCELLENT SLEIGHT OF HAND INSURED THAT HE RARELY LEFT WITHOUT SOMETHING.
THANKS FOR HAVING ME OVER, CHIP.
FOR PARTICULARLY DESIRABLE ITEMS HE COULD BE MORE DEVIOUS.
SURE.
I MIGHT DROP IN AGAIN NEXT WEEK.
USING A COMPUTER AND HIS EXCELLENT FORGING SKILLS HE WOULD SUBSTITUTE A GOOD FAKE.
HA HA!
SEVERAL FELLOWS HAVE TOLD ME OF THEIR HORROR AT THAT MOMENT OF DISCOVERY.
NO-- IT CAN'T BE!!
JONAH WAS ALSO TALENTED AT DISGUISING HIS APPEARANCE.
GOOD AFTERNOON.
JONAH
AND AT FORGING IDENTIFICATION.
I REPRESENT MR. BINDLE.
VERY WELL.
MANY A PRICELESS ITEM LEFT ITS HOME STUFFED IN HIS UNDERWEAR OR ROLLED IN HIS HAT.
JONAH
HE SAW HIMSELF AS A PRESERVATIONIST-- FREEING THESE COMICS FROM THE WRONG OWNERS.
THOSE ASSHOLES CAN'T APPRECIATE THESE AS I CAN.
IT WAS VERY SATISFYING, LATER ON, TO SEE HIM LOSE EVERYTHING.
IT'S FUNNY-- THE WORLD OF COLLECTING IS NOT A PRETTY PLACE.
FOR A BUNCH OF GUYS WHO LIKE GOOD-OVER-EVIL STORIES...
YOU SURE MEET A LOT OF MORALLY BANKRUPT ASSHOLES.
JONAH WASN'T THE BIGGEST JERK IN COMICS, BUT HE MAY HAVE BEEN THE MOST SELF-DELUDED.
AND HE WAS SO FULL OF HIMSELF!
WHAT A DOPE!
END

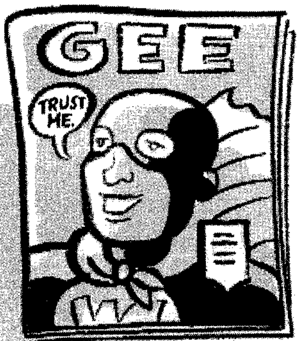
SOME SELECTIONS FROM JONAH'S PILFERED LIBRARY


ALIMONY COMICS
I'M TAKING EVERY CENT.

ALIMONY COMICS #3
VERY FINE- 1949
ILL-ADVISED ROMANCE COMIC
VERY RARE: $4,500



WEIRD FUN #15
NEAR-MINT-1954
1ST APP. GHOST FARMER
VERY SCARCE-$8,000


GEE
TRUST ME.

GEE #48
NEAR-MINT-1952
DEATH OF CAPT. WELL-BEING
HARD TO FIND-$35,000

"It's lotto fever."

• •

The two of them stood now in a cordon of massive eucalyptus trees. Workers had cut huge swaths of eucalyptus saplings and cotoneaster, revealing century-old graves of Portuguese immigrants. "I like the big eucs here," Mahassine said. "They're like angels."

"You sell the trees, maybe call them Guardians," Cassity said. "Guardians of the Portuguese Colonnade has an expensive ring to it." The Fernwood brochure suggests, "Each tree, flower, songbird, boulder, and butterfly will become a memorial to a loved one and hope for the future." Campbell intended to commodify conservation; Cassity intends to commodify nature. Graves near the big eucalyptus now sell for thirty thousand dollars, while a top-of-the-line grave by an "Inner Grove" oak tree is thirty-eight thousand five hundred dollars—oaks being costlier not because they are indigenous but because they are adjudged twenty-eight per cent more charismatic.

In early 2004, at Billy Campbell's suggestion, Cassity hired Sim Van der Ryn, who had served as Governor Jerry Brown's state architect, to head a team of architects and ecologists who would reconceive Fernwood as a green prototype. At two workshops, the team and the partners tossed around dozens of earth-friendly proposals, such as using only quarried stone, rather than "surface-harvested" stone that would have served as a home for insects and small animals. Cassity was initially nourished by the ideas, but once their costs became clear he took to calling his team, skeptically, "the gurus." This January, Cassity convened the team again and, after renegotiating their fees, fired them. "He stood there with this pleasant, smug little smile," David Schwartz, one of the landscape architects, recalls. "This is just a game for him." Van der Ryn wrote Cassity a letter afterward, saying, as he recalls, "that on the one hand there's this Tyler of great transparency and vision, but on the other hand there's this amazingly mean, distrustful individual."

After Billy Campbell made a tour of the cemetery in December, he wrote Cassity an alarmed e-mail about the burial practices he had observed, including, he recalled, graves being dug with a backhoe. Cassity replied, weeks later, that "this prototype has to sing 'I am profitable—just add money and multiply.' I apologize for some of my mismanagement, especially of the gurus, but I had to learn that Green still means green." Campbell had intended that at Fernwood no more than a hundred people would be buried per acre; Cassity was now planning to fill each acre with as many as five hundred bodies and an additional two thousand "inurnments," or urn burials. And Cassity's site plan allowed embalmed bodies to be buried outside the boundaries of the old cemetery, in the so-called Transition Zone. "People want embalming but they also want a natural setting—natural but preserved, like a green bean," he said.

As Campbell and Sehee began to realize that Fernwood was turning into a complex hybrid, they shared their dismay with local environmentalists and home-funeral midwives. Michael Fischer, the former executive director of the Sierra Club, had toured Fernwood with Sehee. "It seemed pretty exciting at first," Fischer told me, "and I'd buy a plot there if they do partner with an environmental group, but then Joe said they're not. If it's just a businessman focussing on the business of death, then perhaps I'll go somewhere else."

This February, the Los Angeles *Times Magazine* ran a story about home funerals and green burial in which Cassity and Sehee were both quoted extensively. The following day, Cassity, who had always enjoyed Sehee's company—"I loved P.R. Joe; he fit in perfectly with my menagerie"—sent him an e-mail suspending his five-thousand-dollar-a-month retainer. Cassity's motivation seemed to be sheer pique. He wrote, "I believe you are receiving sufficient compensation through your publicized yet nebulous role as a 'managing partner' of this project"—the story actually referred to Sehee as Cassity's "partner"—"as well as the man responsible for conceiving the idea (my recollection is startlingly different)." Cassity told me, "Joe had been publicizing me for so long that not only did he come to feel that he'd made me; I think he was trying to be me."

"After two years of being regarded as a partner, suddenly I was called on the carpet like an out-of-line employee," Sehee said. "I was really, really angry." He and Campbell discussed their options, including the inventive but legally dubious one of seeking an injunction against Fernwood, on the premise that Cassity had misused Campbell's intellectual property. They held off on suing, even though Campbell had never been paid for any of his work, but Sehee decided, on his lawyer's advice, not to reply to Cassity's e-mail. Sehee and Campbell eventually decided to go into business as Memorial Ecosystems Services, which would do what Memeco had tried to do but as a concessionaire of burial services—that is, it would oversee the work but not own the land—and without Cassity's money.

The split left Cassity feeling troubled and regretful. "I think about P.R. Joe and Dr. Campbell all the time," he said in early May. "It would be good to talk with them, to transform hate-hate to love-hate. Through ego-driven madness we'll create something good for the world. And if we can't talk nicely I'll sue them and use my hostility to fuel my ability to outcompete them."

The rest of the Cassity family was pleased by the demise of what they had always seen as a misbegotten partnership. "Tyler was bringing these guys to the party," Brent said. "Joe, in particular, was an add-on." Cassity acknowledges that Campbell and Sehee probably believed that Fernwood would not be owned by his family. But, from the start, Fernwood has been owned by Hollywood Forever, which is part of the Forever Network of cemeteries, which is owned by Forever Enterprises, which is held in a trust, RBT, whose beneficiaries are Rhonda, Brent, and Tyler Cassity.

"Our biggest fear all along was that some big cemetery company would appropriate the idea to make money, rather than to establish lasting conservation," Sehee said. "And that's what happened—only we did it. We created what we feared." He and Campbell began to wonder if, in Cassity's mind, they had ever been his partners.

Cassity has broken with partners before. He accepts such difficulties wryly, and even stoically, as if he were being punished for being so quick to grasp that each of us goes alone to the grave. Cassity told me that when he dies—he closed his eyes, picturing the scene—his memorial at Hollywood Forever will be "a circular island of Carrara marble in the lake, beneath which is a submerged sarcophagus, atop which is a statue of a naked Narcissus on all fours, staring at his reflection."

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in May, the cremated remains of Carolyn Sloss, eighty-four, were interred on a steep hillside at Fernwood. A dozen mourners had gathered in a loose circle around the grave, and, after a reading of the Twenty-third Psalm and a Wendell Berry poem, five of them offered brief remembrances: "She always cooked me hamburgers and spaghetti"; "Ornery sometimes, but that was part of her spirit"; "I'm wearing her shirt now, with the Velcro wrist flaps." The family took turns spading dirt into the hole around the papier-mâché "earth urn," and then laid flowers on the grave.

Back in the office, the Slosses asked to see the LifeStory again (it had already played at a larger memorial service). Everyone watched as photographs of Carolyn flashed by on a computer screen to the tune of "The Girl from Ipanema." She was young and then, five minutes later, she was old. The family arose, smiling, and stood outside chatting for half an hour before they drove away.

That upbeat mood was what had first got Martha Sloss, Carolyn's daughter, interested in the cemetery. "Something was different about the place, and they had candles that smelled good," Sloss, a psychotherapist, told me. (Cassity insists on keeping Diptyque candles burning—narcissus, jasmine, and oak—a trick he learned from his mother, who slips a cake in the oven when she's showing a house.) "I never felt depressed—I felt good there," Sloss said. "We could be ourselves, not guarded or pretend sombre." Her family had budgeted a thousand dollars for direct cremation, but by the time they were done they had spent $4,778, and she and her husband had put down an additional two thousand dollars to hold spots near her mother for themselves.

During Carolyn Sloss's service, Cassity crouched in the grass a few feet away, studying everything from the casual attire—flip-flops, jeans—to the companionably late start of the service. In recent weeks, he'd taken to keeping a few changes of clothes in a pine coffin in the showroom of the mortuary, where he was to be found at all hours.

There was still much to get right. A number of California newspapers had run stories about Fernwood, although some of the facts that they contained might more accurately be termed plans, or hopes. This March, Cassity and one of his funeral directors, a sardonic former Scotland Yard detective named Gary McRae, told the Sacramento *Bee* that more than a hundred people had been buried at Fernwood since Cassity had taken title; that formaldehyde was now banned; that visitors were guided to graves via G.P.S.-equipped laptops that automatically began playing the deceased's LifeStory at the right spot; and that the cemetery had a conservation easement in place. (McRae also called Fernwood a "soul spa," which earned him Cassity's admiration.) Cassity admitted that he hadn't actually counted the burials—the number was closer to fifty. And, in truth, the G.P.S. system remains in the prototype stage—Cassity judged the original proposal, at six hundred thousand dollars, much too expensive. He also acknowledged that he had neglected to clarify that he was not planning to seek an easement until after five years or so, by which time he would have learned how his customers wanted to use the land. In the meantime, Fernwood's brochure refers to burial plots as "easements."

On Mother's Day, Cassity, McRae, and I were standing outside the Fernwood office when two women drove past; the older one rolled her window down and asked, "Is Mom the one furthest up the hill—the mound?"

"No," McRae said. "It's the other one."

The woman nodded, absorbing this. "Well, we've been getting it wrong until today. But thanks!"

As they drove off, Cassity blushed. "The need for grave markers on handhelds—we've got to get on that. People feel very foolish paying respects to the wrong grave."

After the Sloss service, Cassity said, "It's clear what the elements of a Fernwood service are, if you leave people alone to do it. They walk up the hill carrying the coffin or urn, they gather in a circle, they speak, they toss the flowers. We can now standardize it, maybe suggest that people lay their flowers after each one speaks, and print out a handbook for a do-it-yourself service."

Cassity's developing ritual of departure draws equally from Scripture and self-help. "We encourage a Circle of Remembrance at memorial services, like an A.A. meeting—we did the first one last year at Hollywood, for Fay Wray," he said. Speakers hold a lit candle and share a recollection of the deceased, then place the candle in sand, in a memorial bowl. Cassity plans to gather the melted wax after each service and reconstitute it as a Memory Candle, which he'll present to the family with a fern and an oak leaf—a sales mnemonic for "Fernwood"—and instructions to light the candle on the anniversary of the loved one's death. He is so enamored of his new rite that when the Fernwood gravedigger Roy Armanini was eased into retirement, in late June, Cassity threw himself into planning a Circle of Remembrance for the goodbye party and seemed crestfallen when one of his staff pointed out, hesitantly, that Armanini was not yet actually dead.

Other businessmen have also begun to exploit the perceived hunger for green burial. Forest Lawn's Hollywood Hills branch recently opened a cremation garden called the Woodlands. "It's for people who like the nature option," Forest Lawn's C.E.O., John Llewellyn, who is Hubert Eaton's great-nephew, said. "But it's not really green—it's plastic urns and cremation vaults and traditional, rather than indigenous, plants."

Cassity's new dream is to establish green burial facilities in every county along the California coast. He's looking closely at Carmel Valley, two hours south of San Francisco, where there's a several-thousand-acre ranch filled with oak trees draped in Spanish moss—not far from properties owned by Rupert Murdoch and Clint Eastwood—which he and a prominent environmental organization would like to buy. It's a pristine tract, where the environmental organization (its officials asked that it not be named) would preserve a condor habitat. As we drove into Carmel, Cassity explained that he hoped to underwrite that goal by establishing a five-hundred-acre memorial landscape for the wealthy. "This is destination cremation and interment," he said.

There are two significant obstacles to Cassity's plan. An official at the environmental organization told me, "We don't hold a conservation easement frivolously, as it's not an asset—it's a liability to manage. If the property is going to cost us twenty million dollars, and we have ten, Tyler would have to commit up front for that ten million." And though green-burial theory holds that nature is not man's enemy, conservation theory holds that man is often nature's. "We've got a real problem in California with sudden oak death, which comes from a fungus that can be spread by the soles of people's shoes," the official continued. "If you open the property to hikers who are visiting their dead relatives, are you going to kill the very oaks you're trying to conserve?"

Cassity's ability to bring investors into such a venture would depend, in great part, on the vitality of his model at Fernwood. But he is confident that he could sell graves in Carmel. Standing at the base of an enormous three-hundred-year-old oak tree, Cassity said, "It's all perceived value. Should an oak be fifty thousand dollars? Why not five hundred thousand dollars? A private family mausoleum anywhere is one million dollars. So what is the value of an oak tree? If we set it too low, then it doesn't feel exclusive." He circled the tree, examining its gnarled branches, the doughty, living wood that predates the birth of George Washington. "Since we're nomads now in America, this would be a family's place of return, a one-acre oak plot where the bodies would be laid in a spiral out from the trunk, a spiral that would trace the passage of the generations. Seen that way, a million dollars for an oak doesn't seem unreasonable. If I were a hundred-millionaire, I'd buy one. Wouldn't you?"

After months of angry silence, and with the status of their separate green-burial projects uncertain, the three former partners agreed to try to reconcile. Cassity and Sehee planned to meet on Memorial Day Weekend at the National AIDS Memorial Grove, in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. Campbell, who was on call that weekend, was going to conference in by cell phone. Earlier that week, he told me, hopefully, "It would be nice to get to a place where I can wish Tyler well in his success."

Shortly before the 4 P.M. meeting, Cassity sat in his San Francisco apartment with a Monster energy drink. He mentioned that he had finally given up his lingering ambition to be a novelist. "I think I'm living my novel, choosing my characters. I'm defining my destiny so I can fulfill it," he said, adding wistfully, "while half expecting or hopeful that someone else is designing it." For weeks, he had been looking forward to the rapprochement, but now he suddenly remarked, "I'm bored by the Billy and Joe story, the B story. I think you need to focus on the A story." Which is? "Death. Death is always the A story."

When Cassity arrived at the AIDS Grove, twenty minutes late, he and Sehee smiled at each other ruefully and shook hands. After a brief, largely silent tour of the grove, they found their way back to a stone bench at the entrance and sat side by side, looking off into the trees. "Should we open with a prayer, Joe?" Cassity said.

Sehee hesitated, and then bowed his head and offered a prayer: "That we both are able to find understanding and the wisdom to listen."

"And good shoes," Cassity added.

Sehee nodded. Then he took a deep breath, and explained that he'd been so mad that "I had to take a timeout. But I don't want to revisit it all. I want to see if there's a way we can all work together. I'm not into managing cemeteries—"

"You don't like bodies, Joe."

"I do have to go out of my way to see a body."

"You don't like touching them."

"I like touching live people more," Sehee acknowledged, and they both laughed. "The other thing is your domain, but what I'm interested in is the advocacy, in setting standards for green burial. We have a blank-slate opportunity here to avoid confusing the marketplace, the way they have in England—"

"Oh, that's always the American exceptionalism that leads to doom," Cassity said. "And I'm taking exception to your jump ahead. You were a consultant, Joe, working for me—"

Sehee jumped up and stood in front of Cassity. "No, the whole idea was that we were partners, building something together." He took off his sunglasses, and Cassity took his off, too, and smiled up at him. "Screw you. I never wanted to be your consultant at Fernwood. I wanted to be your partner—"

"Being a partner involves investment—an investment of time and energy." Cassity was sounding increasingly reasonable. (Later, he said, "Joe fought a lot like my brother. When someone gets emotional, I get calmer and cooler. Joe was angry, I was resentful.")

"Oh, please," Sehee said. "I collapsed a business and moved my family up here—" His cell phone rang and he glanced at it. "Billy," he said, and let it ring. After a moment, mastering himself, he continued, "We started a nonprofit to move this thing forward, and you can choose to participate or not." Sehee opened a folder that contained his and Campbell's protocols for green cemeteries, which they hoped to establish, complete with a Good Housekeeping-style seal of approval, under the umbrella of their new Center for Ethical Burial.

Cassity put his hand up and looked away, saying, "I don't want to see it yet. I'd love to see it, but with a disclaimer on it, so that you won't sue me when I come out with something similar."

"You can't do everything in this field, Tyler," Sehee said.

"No," Cassity agreed, in a melancholy tone.

"You need an independent entity like ours to approve of what you're doing, because there have been so many misrepresentations with Fernwood that could blow the whole idea up."

"I'm looking forward to your model. It's something for me to watch." Cassity's cell phone rang. He opened it up to talk—it was Campbell—and then absent-mindedly put it back in his pocket.

Losing patience, Sehee said, "Tyler, if you advertise yourself as a memorial landscape, you don't then go do other things—"

"Of course you do, Joe," Cassity said. "That's business. We do whatever we wish with the requirements we set forward on that site. There are seventeen acres dedicated as pure memorial landscape, and there are other zones where we do traditional burial and embalming because that is the standard of care and maintenance in that section."

"Do you think the Bay Area, after reading what they have about Fernwood, believes that embalming is going on, and that you're doing conventional burial on land that could potentially be preserved? You used people like me to make misrepresentations—"

"Which ones, specifically?" Cassity asked, silkily.

"You don't have to have language in the price list that tells people embalming is necessary for a viewing. Is embalming necessary for a viewing, Tyler?"

"If one has a communicable airborne disease, yes." (Though funeral directors often make this claim, there are no laws in California requiring embalming in the case of such a disease.)

"Oh, come on—that's bullshit."

Cassity stood. "Let's walk, Joe."

They wandered down the sidewalk. Sehee's phone rang, and he opened it and said, "We'll call you back, Billy. Someone will call you back." After a moment, he said to Cassity, "What matters to me most is not arguing about the past but saving this idea that we both love—"

"If we don't fix the past, we'll repeat it, Joe. The ghosts of the past always have to be laid to rest."

"I think that's just such a fallacy. I learned in a twelve-step program—"

"What was your addiction?"

Sehee quivered, then burst out, "I was addicted to crazy people!" They both laughed.

"Life is short, Joe," Cassity said. After a moment, he went on, "We were dating, and we broke up, and now you suddenly want to get married?"

"I don't want to marry you, Tyler. I want to have an arm's-length relationship, where we can certify what you do, a tidy, elegant way to avoid a legal mess, and steer business your way."

Cassity bent and picked a pink rhododendron blossom and gave it to Sehee. Holding it, a little unwillingly, Sehee tried again: "Tyler, you, more than any person, can make this idea come out right—"

"So why are you my enemy, Joe?"

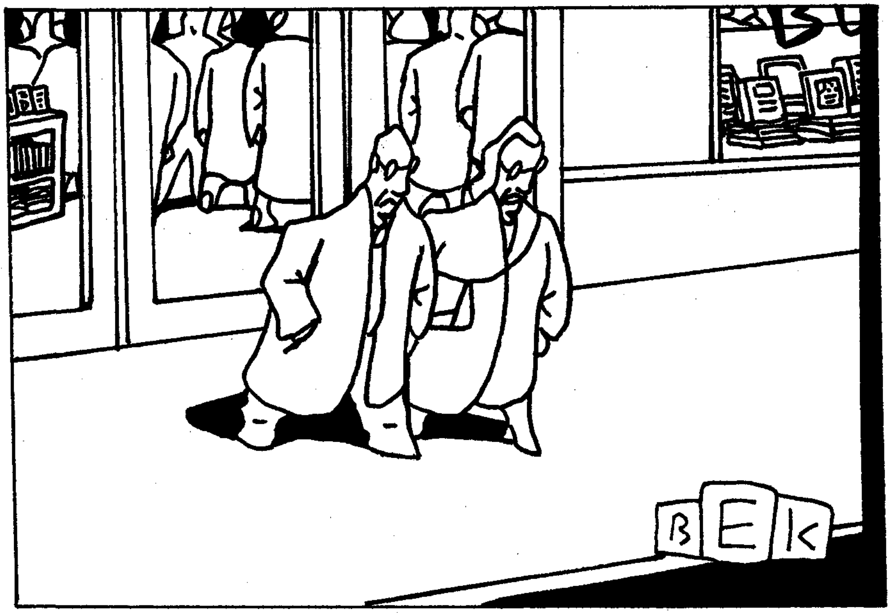
"What? Why am I your enemy?"

"I don't know!"

"No! What?" Sehee said, bewildered. "Listen, this industry is rotten, and I'm offering you my help to change it! If I thought I was coming here as an enemy—"

"If you're not, you'd better hug me as we say goodbye," Cassity said, stepping forward. After a pause, Sehee shuffled into a gingerly hug. Cassity turned and opened the door of his blue Prius hearse. "So we'll talk again, if you like," he said, smiling ambiguously. "Maybe you can call Billy, as I've had enough reconciliation for today."

Watching Cassity drive away, Sehee shook his head. "Wow," he said. "You know, wow. He orchestrates the crazymaking—I mean, he's done some wonderful things, but he just . . . It's just so hard for him to deal with living people." He stared at Cassity's rhododendron as if it had suddenly sprouted from his palm, and then tossed it aside with a shudder. "Oh, it's very easy to love a corpse." ♦



"That was too many fresh original voices for one night."

FICTION

THE VIEW FROM CASTLE ROCK

BY ALICE MUNRO

On a visit to Edinburgh with his father when he is nine or ten years old, Andrew finds himself climbing the damp, uneven stone steps of the Castle. His father is in front of him, some other men behind—it's a wonder how many friends his father has found, standing in cubbyholes where there are bottles set on planks, in the High Street—until at last they crawl out on a shelf of rock, from which the land falls steeply away. It has just stopped raining, the sun is shining on a silvery stretch of water far ahead of them, and beyond that is a pale green and grayish-blue land, a land as light as mist, sucked into the sky.

"America," his father tells them, and one of the men says that you would never have known it was so near.

"It is the effect of the height we are on," another says.

"There is where every man is sitting in the midst of his own properties and even the beggars is riding around in carriages," Andrew's father says, paying no attention to them. "So there you are, my lad"—he turns to Andrew—"and God grant that one day you will see it closer, and I will myself, if I live."

Andrew has an idea that there is something wrong with what his father is saying, but he is not well enough acquainted with geography to know that they are looking at Fife. He does not know if the men are mocking his father or if his father is playing a trick on them. Or if it is a trick at all.

Some years later, in the harbor of Leith, on the fourth of June, 1818, Andrew and his father—whom I must call Old James, because there is a James in every generation—and Andrew's pregnant wife, Agnes, his brother Walter, his sister Mary, and also his son James, who is not yet two years old, set foot on board a ship for the first time in their lives.

Old James makes this fact known to the ship's officer who is checking off the names.

"The first time, serra, in all my long life. We are men of the Ettrick. It is a landlocked part of the world."

The officer says a word which is unintelligible to them but plain in meaning. *Move along.* He has run a line through their names. They move along or are pushed along, Young James riding on Mary's hip.

"What is this?" Old James says, regarding the crowd of people on deck. "Where are we to sleep? Where have all these rabble come from? Look at the faces on them—are they the blackamoors?"

"Black Highlanders, more like," Walter says. This is a joke, muttered so that his father cannot hear, Highlanders being one of the sorts the old man despises.

"There are too many people," his father continues. "The ship will sink."

"No," Walter says, speaking up now. "Ships do not often sink because of too many people. That's what the fellow was there for, to count the people."

Barely on board the vessel and this seventeen-year-old whelp has taken on knowing airs; he has taken to contradicting his father. Fatigue, astonishment, and the weight of the greatcoat he is wearing prevent Old James from cuffing him.

The business of life aboard ship has already been explained to the family. In fact, it has been explained by the old man himself. He was the one who knew all about provisions, accommodations, and the kinds of people you would find on board. All Scotsmen and all decent folk. No Highlanders, no Irish.

But now he cries out that it is like the swarm of bees in the carcass of the lion.

"An evil lot, an evil lot. Oh, that ever we left our native land."

"We have not left yet," Andrew says. "We are still looking at Leith. We would do best to go below and find ourselves a place."

More lamentation. The bunks are narrow planks with horsehair pallets that are both hard and prickly.

"Better than nothing," Andrew says.

"Oh, that ever I was enticed to bring us here, onto this floating sepulchre."

Will nobody shut him up? Agnes thinks. This is the way he will go on and on, like a preacher or a lunatic, when the fit takes him. She cannot abide it. She is in more agony herself than he is ever likely to know.

"Well, are we going to settle here or are we not?" she says.

Some people have hung up their plaids or shawls to make a half-private space for their families. She goes ahead and takes off her outer wrappings to do the same.

The child is turning somersaults in her belly. Her face is hot as a coal, her legs throb, and the swollen flesh in between them—the lips the child must soon part to get out—is a scalding sack of pain.

Her mother would have known what to do about that. She would have known which leaves to mash to make a soothing poultice. At the thought of her mother such misery overcomes her that she wants to kick somebody.

Why does Andrew not speak plainly to his father, reminding him of whose idea it was, who harangued and borrowed and begged to get them just where they are now? Andrew will not do it, Walter will only joke, and as for Mary she can hardly get her voice out of her throat in her father's presence.

Agnes comes from a large Hawick family of weavers, who work in the mills now but worked for generations at home. Working there they learned the art of cutting one another down to size, of squabbling and surviving in close quarters. She is still surprised by the rigid manners, the deference and silences in her husband's family. She thought from the beginning that they were a queer sort and she thinks so still. They are as poor as her own folk but they have such a great notion of themselves. And what have they got to back it up?

Mary has taken Young James back up to the deck. She could tell that he was frightened down there in the half-dark. He does not have to whimper or complain—she knows his feelings by the way he digs his little knees into her.

The sails are furled tight. "Look up there, look up there," Mary says, and points to a sailor who is busy high up in the rigging. The boy on her hip makes his sound for bird—"peep." "Sailor-peep, sailor-peep," she says. She and he communicate in a half-and-half language—half her teaching and half his invention. She believes that he is one of the cleverest children ever born into the world. Being the eldest of her family, and the only girl, she has tended to all her brothers, and been proud of them

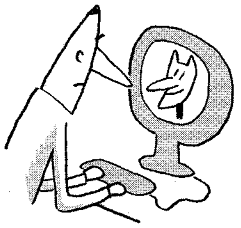
BROWN BROTHERS

all at one time, but she has never known a child like this. Nobody else has any idea how original and independent he is. Men have no interest in children so young, and Agnes, his mother, has no patience with him.

"Talk like folk," Agnes tells him, and if he doesn't she gives him a clout. "What are you?" she says. "Are you a folk or an elfit?"

Mary fears Agnes's temper, but in a way she doesn't blame her. She thinks that women like Agnes—men's women, mother women—lead an appalling life. First with what the men do to them—even as good a man as Andrew—and then with what the children do, coming out. She will never forget the way her own mother lay in bed, out of her mind with a fever, not knowing anyone, till she died, three days after Walter was born. She screamed at the black pot hanging over the fire, thinking it was full of devils.

Mary—her brothers call her "poor Mary"—is under five feet tall and has a tight little face with a lump of protruding chin, and skin that is subject to fiery eruptions that take a long time to fade. When she is spoken to, her mouth twitches as if the words were all mixed up with her spittle and her crooked teeth, and the response she manages is a dribble of speech so faint and scrambled that it is hard for people not to think her dim-witted. She has great difficulty looking anybody in the eyes—even the members of her own family. It is only when she gets the boy hitched onto the narrow shelf of her hip that she is capable of some coherent and decisive speech—and then it is mostly to him.



She hears the cow bawling before she can see it. Then she looks up and sees the brown beast dangling in the air, all caged in ropes and kicking and roaring frantically. It is held by a hook on a crane, which now hauls it out of sight. People around her are hooting and clapping their hands. A child cries out, wanting to know if the cow will be dropped into the sea. A man tells him no—she will go along with them on the ship.

"Will they milk her, then?"

"Aye. Keep still. They'll milk her," the man says reprovingly. And another man's voice climbs boisterously over his.

"They'll milk her till they take the hammer to her, and then ye'll have the blood pudding for yer dinner."

Now follow the hens, swung through the air in crates, all squawking and fluttering in their confinement and pecking one another when they can, so that some feathers escape and float down through the air. And after them a pig trussed up like the cow, squealing with a human note in its distress and shifting wildly in midair, so that howls of both delight and outrage rise below, depending on whether they come from those who are hit or those who see others hit.

James is laughing, too. He recognizes shite, and cries out his own word for it, which is "gruggin."

Someday he may remember this, Mary thinks. *I saw a cow and a pig fly through the air.* Then he may wonder if it was a dream. And nobody will be there—she certainly won't—to tell him that it was not, that it happened on this ship. It's possible that he will never see a ship like this again in all his waking life. She has no idea where they will go when they reach the other shore, but she imagines that it will be someplace inland, among the hills, someplace like the Ettrick.

She does not think that she will live long, wherever they go. She coughs in the summer as well as the winter, and when she coughs her chest aches. She suffers from sties, and cramps in the stomach, and her bleeding comes rarely but may last a month when it does. She hopes, though, that she will not die while James is still in need of her, which he will be for a while yet. She knows that the time will come when he will turn away, as her brothers did, when he will become ashamed of the connection with her. At least, that is what she tells herself will happen, but like anybody in love she cannot believe it.

On a trip to Peebles, Walter bought himself a notebook to write in, but for several days he has found too much to pay attention to and too little space or quiet on the deck even to open it. Finally, after some investigating, he has discovered a favorable spot, near the cabins on the upper deck.

> We came on board on the 4th day of June and lay the 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th in the Leith roads getting the ship to a place where we could set sail, which was on the 9th. We passed the corner of Fifeshire all well nothing occurring worth mentioning till this day the 13th in the morning when we were awakened by a cry, John o'Groat's House. We could see it plain and had a fine sail across the Pentland Firth having both wind and tide in our favour and it was in no way dangerous as we had heard tell. There was a child had died, the name of Ormiston and its body was thrown overboard sewed up in a piece of canvas with a large lump of coal at its feet.

He pauses in his writing to think of the weighted sack falling down through the water. Would the piece of coal do its job, would the sack fall straight down to the very bottom of the sea? Or would the current of the sea be strong enough to keep lifting it up and letting it fall, pushing it sideways, taking it as far as Greenland or south to the tropical waters full of rank weeds, the Sargasso Sea? Or might some ferocious fish come along and rip the sack and make a meal of the body before it had even left the upper waters and the region of light?

He pictures it now—the child being eaten. Not swallowed whole as in the case of Jonah but chewed into bits as he himself would chew a tasty chunk from a boiled sheep. But there is the matter of a soul. The soul leaves the body at the moment of death. But from which part of the body does it leave? The best guess seems to be that it emerges with the last breath, having been hidden somewhere in the chest, around the place of the heart and the lungs. Though Walter has heard a joke they used to tell about an old fellow in the Ettrick, to the effect that he was so dirty that when he died his soul came out his arsehole, and was heard to do so with a mighty explosion.

This is the sort of information that preachers might be expected to give you—not mentioning anything like an arsehole, of course, but explaining something of the proper location and exit. Yet they shy away from it. Also they cannot explain—at least, he has never heard one explain—how the souls maintain themselves outside of bodies until the Day of Judgment and how on that day each one finds and recognizes the body that is its own and reunites with it, though it be not so much as a skeleton at that time. *Though it be dust.* There must be some who have studied enough to know how all this is accomplished. But there are also some—he has learned this recently—who have studied and read and thought till they have come to the conclusion that there are no souls at all. No one cares to speak about these people, either, and indeed the thought of them is terrible. How can they live with the fear—indeed, the certainty—of Hell before them?

"Rain, Your Holiness—may I suggest the plastic papal vestments?"

On the third day aboard ship Old James gets up and starts to walk around. After that, he stops and speaks to anybody who seems ready to listen. He tells his name, and says that he comes from Ettrick, from the Valley and Forest of Ettrick, where the old kings of Scotland used to hunt.

"And on the field at Flodden," he says, "after the battle of Flodden, they said you could walk up and down among the corpses and pick out the men from the Ettrick, because they were the tallest and the strongest and the finest-looking men on the ground. I have five sons and they are all good strong lads, but only two of them are with me. One of my sons is in Nova Scotia. The last I heard of him he was in a place called Economy, but we have not had any word of him since and I do not know whether he is alive or dead. My eldest son went off to work in the Highlands, and the son that is next to the youngest took it into his head to go off there, too, and I will never see either of them again. Five sons and, by the mercy of God, all grew to be men, but it was not the Lord's will that I should keep them with me. A man's life is full of sorrow. I have a daughter as well, the oldest of them all, but she is nearly a dwarf. Her mother was chased by a ram when she was carrying her."

> On the afternoon of the 14th a wind from the North and the ship began to shake as if every board that was in it would fly loose from every other. The buckets overflowed from the people that were sick and vomiting and there was the contents of them slipping all over the deck. All people were ordered below but many of them crumpled up against the rail and did not care if they were washed over. None of our family was sick however and now the wind has dropped and the sun has come out and those who did not care if they died in the filth a little while ago have got up and dragged themselves to be washed where the sailors are splashing buckets of water over the decks. The women are busy too washing and rinsing and wringing out all the foul clothing. It is the worst misery and the suddenest recovery I have seen ever in my life.

A young girl ten or twelve years old stands watching Walter write. She is wearing a fancy dress and bonnet and has light-brown curly hair. Not so much a pretty face as a pert one.

"Are you from one of the cabins?" she says.

Walter says, "No. I am not."

"I knew you were not. There are only four of them, and one is for my father and me and one is for the captain and one is for his mother, and she never comes out, and one is for the two ladies. You are not supposed to be on this part of the deck unless you are from one of the cabins."

"Well, I did not know that," Walter says, but does not bestir himself to move away.

"I have seen you before writing in your book."

"I haven't seen you."

"No. You were writing, so you didn't notice. I haven't told anybody about you," she adds carelessly, as if that were a matter of choice and she might well change her mind.

When she leaves, Walter adds a sentence.

> And this night in the year 1818 we lost sight of Scotland.

The words seem majestic to him. He is filled with a sense of grandeur, solemnity, and personal importance.

> 16th was a very windy day with the wind coming out of the SW the sea was running very high and the ship got her gib-boom broken on account of the violence of the wind. And our sister Agnes was taken into the cabin.

"Sister," he has written, as if she were all the same to him as poor Mary, but that is not the case. Agnes is a tall well-built girl with thick dark hair and dark eyes. The flush on one of her cheeks slides into a splotch of pale brown as big as a handprint. It is a birthmark, which people say is a pity, because without it she would be handsome. Walter can hardly bear looking at it, but this is not because it is ugly. It is because he longs to touch it, to stroke it with the tips of his fingers. It looks not like ordinary skin but like the velvet on a deer. His feelings about her are so troubling that he can speak to her only unpleasantly, if he speaks at all. And she pays him back with a good seasoning of contempt.

Agnes thinks that she is in the water and the waves are heaving her up and slamming her down. Every time they slap her down it is worse than the time before, and she sinks farther and deeper, the moment of relief passing before she can grab it, for the next wave is already gathering its power to hit her.

Then sometimes she knows that she is in a bed, a strange bed and strangely soft, but it is all the worse for that because when she sinks down there is no resistance, no hard place where the pain has to stop. People keep rushing back and forth in front of her. They are all seen sideways and all transparent, talking very fast so she can't make them out, and maliciously taking no heed of her. She sees Andrew in the midst of them, and two or three of his brothers. Some of the girls she knows are there, too—the friends she used to lark around with in Hawick. And they do not give a poor penny for the plight she is in now.

She never knew before that she had so many enemies. They are grinding her down and pretending they don't even know it. Their movement is grinding her to death.

Her mother bends over her and says in a drawling, cold, lackadaisical voice, "You are not trying, my girl. You must try harder." Her mother is all dressed up and talking fine, like some Edinburgh lady.

Evil stuff is poured into her mouth. She tries to spit it out, knowing it is poison.

I will just get up and get out of this, she thinks. She starts trying to pull herself loose from her body, as if it were a heap of rags on fire.

She hears a man's voice, giving some order. "Hold her," he says, and she is split and stretched wide open to the world and the fire.

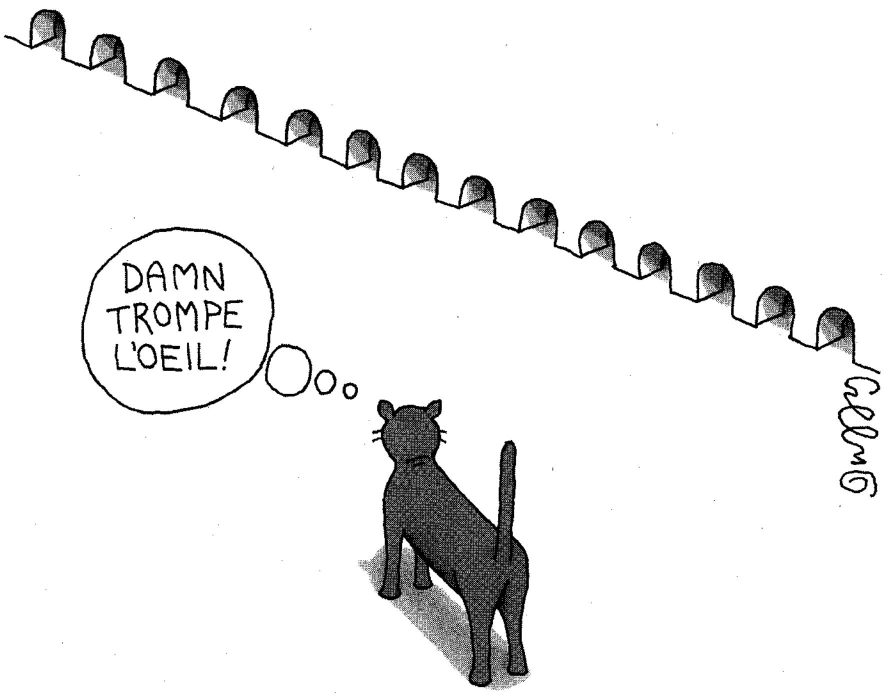
"Ah—ah—anh," the man says, panting as if he had been running in a race.

Then a cow that is so heavy, bawling heavy with milk, rears up and sits down on Agnes's stomach.

"Now. Now," the man says, and he groans at the end of his strength as he tries to heave it off.

The fools. The fools, ever to have let it in.

She was not better till the 18th when she was delivered of a daughter. We having a surgeon on board nothing happened. Nothing occurred till the 22nd this was the roughest day we had till then experienced. Agnes was mending in an ordinary way till the 29th we saw a great shoal of porpoises and the 30th (yesterday) was a very rough sea with the wind blowing from the west we went rather backwards than forwards.


DAMN TROMPE L'OEIL!

"In the Ettrick there is what they call the highest house in Scotland," Old James says, "and the house that my grandfather lived in was a higher one than that. The name of the place is Phauhope—they call it Phaup. My grandfather was Will O'Phaup, and fifty years ago you would have heard of him if you came from any place south of the Forth and north of the Debatable Lands."

There are people who curse to see him coming, but others who are glad of any distraction. His sons hear his voice from far away, amid all the other commotion on the deck, and make tracks in the opposite direction.

For the first two or three days, Young James refused to be unfastened from Mary's hip. He was bold enough, but only if he could stay there. At night he slept in her cloak, curled up beside her, and she wakened aching along her left side, because she had lain stiffly all night so as not to disturb him. Then in the space of one morning he was down and running about and kicking at her if she tried to hoist him up.

Everything on the ship calls out for his attention. Even at night he tries to climb over her and run away in the dark. So she gets up aching not only from her position but from lack of sleep altogether. One night she drops off and the child gets loose, but most fortunately stumbles against his father's body in his bid for escape. Henceforth, Andrew insists that he be tied down every night. He howls, of course, and Andrew shakes him and cuffs him and then he sobs himself to sleep. Mary lies by him softly explaining that this is necessary so that he cannot fall off the ship into the ocean, but he regards her at these times as his enemy, and if she puts out a hand to stroke his face he tries to bite it with his baby teeth. Every night he goes to sleep in a rage, but in the morning when she unties him, still half asleep and full of his infant sweetness, he clings to her drowsily and she is suffused with love.

Then one day he is gone. She is in the line for wash water and she turns around and he is not beside her. She was just speaking a few words to the woman ahead of her, answering a question about Agnes and the infant, she had just told the woman its name—Isabel—and in that moment he got away.

Everything in an instant is overturned. The nature of the world is altered. She runs back and forth, crying out James's name. She runs up to strangers, to sailors who laugh at her as she begs them, "Have you seen a little boy? Have you seen a little boy this high, he has blue eyes?"

"I seen fifty or sixty of them like that in the last five minutes," a man says to her. A woman trying to be kind says that he will turn up, Mary should not worry herself, he will be playing with some of the other children. Some women even look about, as if they would help her search, but of course they cannot, they have their own responsibilities.

This is what Mary sees plainly in those moments of anguish: that the world which has turned into a horror for her is still the same ordinary world for all these other people and will remain so even if James has truly vanished, even if he has crawled through the ship's railings—she has noticed everywhere the places where this would be possible—and been swallowed by the ocean.

The most brutal and unthinkable of all events, to her, would seem to most others like a sad but not extraordinary misadventure. It would not be unthinkable to them.

Or to God. For in fact when God makes some rare and remarkable, beautiful human child is He not particularly tempted to take His creature back, as if the world did not deserve it?

Still, she is praying to Him all the time. At first she only called on the Lord's name. But as her search grows more specific and in some ways more bizarre—she is ducking under clotheslines that people have contrived for privacy, she thinks nothing of interrupting folk at any business, she flings up the lids of their boxes and roots in their bedclothes, not even hearing them when they curse her—her prayers also become more complicated and audacious. She tries to think of something to offer, something that could equal the value of James's being restored to her. But what does she have? Nothing of her own—not health or prospects or anybody's regard. There is no piece of luck or even a hope that she can offer to give up. What she has is James.

And how can she offer James for James?

This is what is knocking around in her head.

But what about her love of James? Her extreme and perhaps idolatrous, perhaps wicked love of another creature. She will give up that, she will give it up gladly, if only he isn't gone.

If only he can be found. If only he isn't dead.

She recalls all this an hour or two after somebody has noticed the boy peeping out from under a large empty bucket, listening to the hubbub. And she retracts her vow at once. Her understanding of God is shallow and unstable, and the truth is that, except in a time of terror such as she has just experienced, she does not really care. She has always felt that God or even the idea of Him was more distant from her than from other people. There is a stubborn indifference in her that nobody knows about. In fact, everybody may imagine that she clings secretly to religion because there is so little else available to her. They are quite wrong, and now that she has James back she gives no thanks but thinks what a fool she was and how she could not give up her love of him any more than stop her heart beating.

After that, Andrew insists that James be tied down not only by night but also by day, to the post of the bunk or to their clothesline on the deck. Andrew has trounced his son for the trick he played, but the look in James's eyes says that his tricks are not finished.

Agnes keeps asking for salt, till they begin to fear that she will fuss herself into a fever. The two women looking after her are cabin passengers, Edinburgh ladies, who took on the job out of charity.

"You be still now," they tell her. "You have no idea what a fortunate lassie you are that we had Mr. Suter on board."

They tell her that the baby was turned the wrong way inside her, and they were all afraid that Mr. Suter would have to cut her, and that might be the end of her. But he had managed to get it turned so that he could wrestle it out.

"I need salt for my milk," says Agnes, who is not going to let them put her in her place with their reproaches and their Edinburgh speech. They are idiots, anyway. She has to explain to them how you must put a little salt in the baby's first milk, just place a few grains on your finger and squeeze a drop or two of milk onto it and let the child swallow that before you put it to the breast. Without this precaution there is a good chance that it will grow up half-witted.

"Is she even a Christian?" one of them says to the other.

"I am as much as you," Agnes says. But to her own surprise and shame she starts to weep aloud, and the baby howls along with her, out of sympathy or hunger. And still she refuses to feed it.

Mr. Suter comes in to see how she is. He asks what all the grief is about, and they tell him the trouble.

"A newborn baby to get salt in its stomach—where did she get the idea?"

He says, "Give her the salt." And he stays to see her squeeze the milk on her salty finger, lay the finger to the infant's lips, and follow it with her nipple.

He asks her what the reason is and she tells him.

"And does it work every time?"

She tells him—a little surprised that he is as stupid as they are, though gentler—that it works without fail.

"So where you come from they all have their wits about them? And are all the girls strong and good-looking like you?"

She says that she would not know about that.

Sometimes visiting young men, educated men from the town, used to hang around her and her friends, complimenting them and trying to work up a conversation, and she always thought that any girl who allowed it was a fool, even if the man was handsome. Mr. Suter is far from handsome—he is too thin, and his face is badly pocked, so that at first she took him for an old fellow. But he has a kind voice, and if he is teasing her a little there is no harm in it. No man would have the nature left to deal with a woman after looking at her spread wide, her raw parts open to the air.

"Are you sore?" he asks, and she believes there is a shadow on his damaged cheeks, a slight blush rising. She says that she is no worse than she has to be, and he nods, picks up her wrist, and bows over it, strongly pressing her pulse.

"Lively as a racehorse," he says, with his hands still above her, as if he did not know where to put them next. Then he decides to push back her hair and press his fingers to her temples, as well as behind her ears.

She will recall this touch, this curious, gentle, tingling pressure, with an addled mixture of scorn and longing, for many years to come.

"Good," he says. "No sign of a fever."

He watches, for a moment, the child sucking.

"All's well with you now," he says, with a sigh. "You have a fine daughter, and she can say all her life that she was born at sea."

Andrew arrives later and stands at the foot of the bed. He has never looked on her in such a bed as this (a regular bed, even though bolted to the wall). He is red with shame in front of the ladies, who have brought in the basin to wash her.

"That's it, is it?" he says, with a nod—not a glance—at the bundle beside her.

She laughs in a vexed way and asks what did he think it was. That is all it takes to knock him off his unsteady perch, to puncture his pretense of being at ease. Now he stiffens up, even redder, doused with fire. It isn't just what she said. It is the whole scene—the smell of the infant and the milk and the blood, and most of all the basin, the cloths, the women standing by, with their proper looks that might seem to a man both admonishing and full of derision.

He looks as if he can't think of another word to say, so she has to tell him, with rough mercy, to get on his way, there's work to be done here.

Some of the girls used to say that when you finally gave in and lay down with a man—even granting he was not the man of your first choice—it gave you a helpless but calm and even sweet feeling. Agnes does not recall that she felt that with Andrew. All she felt was that he was an honest lad and the right one for her in her circumstances, and that it would never occur to him to run off and leave her.

Walter has continued to go to the same private place to write in his book and nobody has caught him there. Except the girl, of course. One day he arrives at the place and she is there before him, skipping with a red-tasselled rope. When she sees him she stops, out of breath. And no sooner does she catch her breath than she begins to cough, so that it is several minutes before she can speak. She sinks down against the pile of canvas that conceals the spot, flushed, her eyes full of bright tears from the coughing. He simply stands and watches her, alarmed at this fit but not knowing what to do.

"Do you want me to fetch one of the ladies?"

He is on speaking terms with the Edinburgh women now, on account of Agnes. They take a kind interest in the mother and baby and Mary and Young James, and think that the old father is comical. They are also amused by Andrew and Walter, who seem to them so bashful.

The coughing girl is shaking her curly head violently.

"I don't want them," she says, when she can gasp the words out. "I have never told anybody that you come here. So you mustn't tell anybody about me."

"Well, you are here by rights."

She shakes her head again and gestures for him to wait till she can speak more easily.

"I mean that you saw me skipping. My father hid my skipping rope but I found where he hid it."

"It isn't the Sabbath," Walter says reasonably. "So what is wrong with you skipping?"

"How do I know?" she says, regaining her saucy tone. "Perhaps he thinks I am too old for it. Will you swear not to tell anyone?"

What a queer, self-important little thing she is, Walter thinks. She speaks only of her father, so he thinks it likely that she has no brothers or sisters and—like himself—no mother. That condition has probably made her both spoiled and lonely.

The girl—her name is Nettie—becomes a frequent visitor when Walter tries to write in his book. She always says that she does not want to disturb him, but after keeping ostentatiously quiet for about five minutes she interrupts him with some question about his life or a bit of information about hers. It is true that she is motherless and an only child. She has never even been to school. She talks most about her pets—those dead and those living at her house in Edinburgh—and a woman named Miss Anderson, who used to travel with her and teach her. It seems that she was glad to see the back of this woman, and surely Miss Anderson, too, was glad to depart, after all the tricks that were played on her—the live frog in her boot and the woollen but lifelike mouse in her bed.

Nettie has been back and forth to America three times. Her father is a wine merchant whose business takes him to Montreal.

She wants to know all about how Walter and his people live. Her questions are, by country standards, quite impertinent. But Walter does not really mind. In his own family he has never been in a position that allowed him to instruct or teach or tease anybody younger than himself, and it gives him pleasure.

What does Walter's family have for supper when they are at home? How do they sleep? Are animals kept in the house? Do the sheep have names, and what are the sheepdogs' names, and can you make pets of them? What is the arrangement of the scholars in the schoolroom? Are the teachers cruel? What do some of his words mean that she does not understand, and do all the people where he is from talk like him?

"Oh, aye," Walter says. "Even His Majesty the Duke does. The Duke of Buccleuch."

She laughs and freely pounds her little fist on his shoulder.

"Now you are teasing me. I know it. I know that Dukes are not called Your Majesty. They are not."

One day she arrives with paper and drawing pencils. She says that she has brought them to keep herself busy, so she will not be a nuisance to him. She offers to teach him to draw, if he wants to learn. But his attempts make her laugh, and he deliberately does worse and worse, till she laughs so hard she has one of her coughing fits. Then she says that she will do some drawings in the back of his notebook, so that he will have them to remember the voyage by. She draws the sails up above and a hen that has somehow escaped its cage and is trying to travel like a seabird over the water. She sketches from memory her dog that died. And she makes a picture of the icebergs she saw, higher than houses, on one of her past voyages with her father. The setting sun shone through these icebergs and made them look—she says—like castles of gold. Rose-colored and gold.

Everything that she has drawn, including the icebergs, has a look that is both guileless and mocking, peculiarly expressive of herself.

"How that relates to the Social Security debate baffles me, Senator. But, since you ask, I'm nude from the waist down."

• •

"The other day I was telling you about that Will O'Phaup that was my grandfather, but there was more to him than I told you. I did not tell you that he was the last man in Scotland to speak to the fairies. It is certain that I have never heard of any other, in his time or later."

Walter is sitting around a corner, near some sailors who are mending the torn sails, but by the sounds that are made throughout the story he can guess that the out-of-sight audience is mostly women.

There is one tall well-dressed man—a cabin passenger, certainly—who has paused to listen within Walter's view. There is a figure close to this man's other side, and at one moment in the tale this figure peeps around to look at Walter and he sees that it is Nettie. She seems about to laugh, but she puts a finger to her lips as if warning herself—and Walter—to keep silent.

The man must, of course, be her father. The two of them stand there listening quietly till the tale is over. Then the man turns and speaks directly, in a familiar yet courteous way, to Walter. "Are you writing down what you can make of this?" the man asks, nodding at Walter's notebook.

Walter is alarmed, not knowing what to say. But Nettie looks at him with calming reassurance, then drops her eyes and waits beside her father as a demure little miss should.

"I am writing a journal of the voyage," Walter says stiffly.

"Now, that is interesting. That is an interesting fact, because I, too, am keeping a journal of this voyage. I wonder if we find the same things worth writing of."

"I only write what happens," Walter says, wanting to make clear that this is a job for him and not an idle pleasure. Still, he feels that some further justification is called for. "I am writing to keep track of every day so that at the end of the voyage I can send a letter home."

The man's voice is smoother and his manner gentler than any address Walter is used to. He wonders if he is being made sport of in some way. Or if Nettie's father is the sort of person who strikes up an acquaintance in the hope of getting hold of your money for some worthless investment.

Not that Walter's looks or dress would mark him out as a likely prospect.

"So you do not describe what you see? Only what, as you say, is happening?"

Walter is about to say no, and then yes. For he has just thought, if he writes that there is a rough wind, is that not describing? You do not know where you are with this kind of person.

"You are not writing about what we have just heard?"

"No."

"It might be worth it. There are people who go around now prying into every part of Scotland and writing down whatever these old country folk have to say. They think that the old songs and stories are disappearing and that they are worth recording. I don't know about that—it isn't my business. But I would not be surprised if the people who have written it all down will find that it was worth their trouble—I mean to say, there will be money in it."

Nettie speaks up unexpectedly.

"Oh, hush, Father. The old fellow is starting again."

This is not what any daughter would say to her father in Walter's experience, but the man seems ready to laugh, looking down at her fondly.

And indeed Old James's voice has been going this little while, breaking in determinedly and reproachfully on those of his audience who might have thought it was time for their own conversations.

"And still another time, but in the long days in the summer, out on the hills late in the day but before it was well dark . . ."

Walter has heard the stories his father is spouting, and others like them, all his life, but the odd thing is that until they came on board this ship he had never heard them from his father. The father he knew until a short while ago would, he is certain, have had no use for them.

"This is a terrible place we live in," his father used to say. "The people is all full of nonsense and bad habits, and even our sheep's wool is so coarse you cannot sell it. The roads are so bad a horse cannot go more than four miles an hour. And for plowing here they use the spade or the old Scotch plow, though there has been a better plow in other places for fifty years. 'Oh, aye, aye,' they say when you ask them. 'Oh, aye, but it's too steep hereabouts, the land is too heavy.'

"To be born in the Ettrick is to be born in a backward place," he would say, "where the people is all believing in old stories and seeing ghosts, and I tell you it is a curse to be born in the Ettrick."

And very likely that would lead him on to the subject of America, where all the blessings of modern invention were put to eager use and the people could never stop improving the world around them.

But hearken at him now.

"You must come up and talk to us on the deck above," Nettie's father says to Walter when Old James has finished his story. "I have business to think about and I am not much company for my daughter. She is forbidden to run around, because she is not quite recovered from the cold she had in the winter, but she is fond of sitting and talking."

"I don't believe it is the rule for me to go there," Walter says, in some confusion.

"No, no, that is no matter. My girl is lonely. She likes to read and draw, but she likes company, too. She could show you how to draw, if you like. That would add to your journal."

So they sit out in the open and draw and write. Or she reads aloud to him from her favorite book, which is "The Scottish Chiefs." He already knows the story—who does not know about William Wallace?—but she reads smoothly and at just the proper speed and makes some things solemn and others terrifying and others comical, so that soon he is as much in thrall to the book as she is. Even though, as she says, she has read it twelve times already.

He understands a little better now why she has so many questions to ask him. He and his folk remind her of the people in her book, such people as there were out on the hills and in the valleys in the olden times. What would she think if she knew that the old fellow, the old tale-spinner spouting all over the boat and penning people up to listen as if they were sheep—what would she think if she knew that he was Walter's father?

She would be delighted, probably, more curious about Walter's family than ever. She would not look down on them, except in a way that she could not help or recognize.

> We came on the fishing bank of Newfoundland on the 12th of July and on the 19th we saw land and it was a joyful sight to us. It was a part of Newfoundland. We sailed between Newfoundland and St. Paul's Island and having a fair wind both the 18th and the 19th we found ourselves in the river on the morning of the 20th and within sight of the mainland of North America. We were awakened at about 1 o'clock in the morning and I think every passenger was out of bed at 4 o'clock gazing at the land, it being wholly covered with wood and quite a new sight to us. It was a part of Nova Scotia and a beautiful hilly country.

This is the day of wonders. The land is covered with trees like a head with hair and behind the ship the sun rises, tipping the top trees with light. The sky is clear and shining as

FAMILY HAPPINESS

On our first date, I told my wife
I was a lesbian trapped in the body of a man.
Everybody says that now, of course,
on TV and radio, alternative media outlets,
tattoos and bumper stickers, but this was long ago, when
none but the brave (who deserve the fair)
would come up with something like that.
She smiled the pleased and goofy smile that flowers in her big eyes,
and I thought I had her.
Looking back now, though,
I can see her appraisal of me rounding to completeness.
I can hear her cognition firing.
She knew it. She knew even then
the truth it has cost me the aeons to acquire,
climbing and climbing the broken stairs:
I'm a man trapped in the body of a man.
I clutch the smooth walls and see through his eyes
the oil fires and containment units,
the huge clawed gantries strung out on the twilit polar horizon.
Through his alloyed ears, I hear
the objects of his scorn, his compassion, his hatred, his love
crying out and crying out.
Half my arms are his arms.
Half my face is welded to his face.
The other half mouths his clumsy ironies.
"Life is war," he says.
"Tragic," he says. "Tragic."
The simulacra are marching everywhere,
and deep in the caves the chimeras are breathing.

—*Vijay Seshadri*

a china plate and the water playfully ruffled with wind. Every wisp of fog has gone and the air is full of the resinous smell of the trees. Seabirds are flashing above the sails all golden like creatures of Heaven, but the sailors fire a few shots to keep them from the rigging.

Mary holds Young James up so that he may always remember this first sight of the continent that will be his home. She tells him the name of this land—Nova Scotia.

"It means New Scotland," she says.

Agnes hears her. "Then why doesn't it say so?"

Mary says, "It's Latin, I think."

Agnes snorts with impatience. The baby was woken early by all the hubbub and celebration, and now she is miserable, wanting to be on the breast all the time, wailing whenever Agnes tries to take her off. Young James, observing all this closely, makes an attempt to get on the other breast, and Agnes bats him off so hard that he staggers.

"Suckie-laddie," Agnes calls him. He yelps a bit, then crawls around behind her and pinches the baby's toes.

Another whack.

"You're a rotten egg, you are," his mother says. "Somebody's been spoiling you till you think you're the Laird's arse."

Agnes's roused voice always makes Mary feel as if she were about to catch a blow herself.

Old James is sitting with them on the deck, but pays no attention to this domestic unrest.

"Will you come and look at the country, Father?" Mary says uncertainly. "You can have a better view from the rail."

"I can see it well enough," Old James says. Nothing in his voice suggests that the revelations around them are pleasing to him.

"Ettrick was covered with trees in the old days," he says. "The monks had it first and after that it was the Royal Forest. It was the King's forest. Beech trees, oak trees, rowan trees."

"As many trees as this?" Mary says, made bolder than usual by the novel splendors of the day.

"Better trees. Older. It was famous all over Scotland. The Royal Forest of Ettrick."

"And Nova Scotia is where our brother James is," Mary continues.

"He may be or he may not. It would be easy to die here and nobody know you were dead. Wild animals could have eaten him."

Mary wonders how her father can talk in this way, about how wild animals could have eaten his own son. Is that how the sorrows of the years take hold of you—turning your heart of flesh to a heart of stone, as it says in the old song? And if it is so, how carelessly and disdainfully might he talk about her, who never meant to him a fraction of what the boys did?

Somebody has brought a fiddle onto the deck and is tuning up to play. The people who have been hanging on to the rail and pointing out to one another what they can all see on their own—likewise repeating the name that by now everyone knows, Nova Scotia—are distracted by these sounds and begin to call for dancing. Dancing, at seven o'clock in the morning.

Andrew comes up from below, bearing their supply of water. He stands and watches for a little, then surprises Mary by asking her to dance.

"Who will look after the boy?" Agnes says immediately. "I am not going to get up and chase him." She is fond of dancing, but is prevented now not only by the nursing baby but by the soreness of the parts of her body that were so battered in the birth.

Mary is already refusing, saying she cannot go, but Andrew says, "We will put him on the tether."

"No. No," Mary says. "I've no need to dance." She believes that Andrew has taken pity on her, remembering how she used to be left on the sidelines in school games and at the dancing, though she can actually run and dance perfectly well. Andrew is the only one of her brothers capable of such consideration, but she would almost rather he behaved like the others and left her ignored as she has always been. Pity galls her.

Young James begins to complain loudly, having recognized the word "tether."

"You be still," his father says. "Be still or I'll clout you."

Then Old James surprises them all by turning his attention to his grandson.

"You. Young lad. You sit by me."

"Oh, he will not sit," Mary says. "He will run off and then you cannot chase him, Father. I will stay."

"He will sit," Old James says.

"Well, settle it," Agnes says to Mary. "Go or stay."

Young James looks from one to the other, cautiously snuffling.

"Does he not know even the simplest word?" his grandfather says. "Sit. Lad. Here."

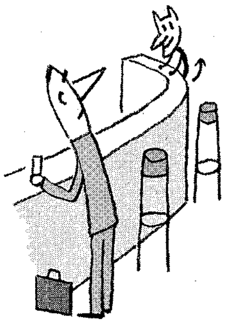
Young James lowers himself, reluctantly, to the spot indicated.

"Now go," Old James says to Mary. And all in confusion, on the verge of tears, she is led away.

People are dancing not just in the figure of the reel but quite outside of it, all over the deck. They are grabbing anyone at all and twirling around. They are even grabbing some of the sailors, if they can get hold of them. Men dance with women, men dance with men, women dance with women, children dance with one another or all alone and without any idea of the steps, getting in the way—but everybody is in everybody's way already and it is no matter.

Mary has caught hands with Andrew and is swung around by him, then passed on to others, who bend to her and fling her undersized body about. She dances down at the level of the children, though she is less bold and carefree. In the thick of so many bodies she is helpless, she cannot pause—she has to stamp and wheel to the music or be knocked down.

"Now, you listen and I will tell you," Old James says. "This old man, Will O'Phaup, my grandfather—he was my grandfather as I am yours—Will O'Phaup was sitting outside his house in the evening, resting himself. It was mild summer weather. All alone, he was. And there was three little lads hardly bigger than you are yourself, they came around the corner of Will's house. They told him good evening. 'Good evening to you, Will O'Phaup,' they says. 'Well, good evening to you, lads. What can I do for you?' 'Can you give us a bed for the night or a place to lie down?' they says. And 'Aye,' he says. 'Aye, I'm thinking three bits of lads like yourselves should not be so hard to find room for.' And he goes into the house with them following and they says, 'And by the bye, could you give us the key, too, the big silver key that you had of us?' Well, Will looks around, and he looks for the key, till he thinks to himself, What key was that? For he knew he never had such a thing in his life. Big key or silver key, he never had it. 'What key are you talking about?' And turns himself around and they are not there. Goes out of the house, all around the house, looks to the road. No trace of them. Looks to the hills. No trace. Then Will knew it. They was no lads at all. Ah, no. They was no lads at all."



James has not made any sound. At his back is the thick and noisy wall of dancers, to the side his mother, with the small clawing beast that bites into her body. And in front of him is the old man with his rumbling voice, insistent but remote, and his blast of bitter breath.

It is the child's first conscious encounter with someone as perfectly self-centered as he is.

He is barely able to focus his intelligence, to show himself not quite defeated. "Key," he says. "Key?"

Agnes, watching the dancing, catches sight of Andrew, red in the face and heavy on his feet, linked arm to arm with various jovial women. There is not one girl whose looks or dancing gives Agnes any worries. Andrew never gives her any worries, anyway. She sees Mary tossed around, with even a flush of color in her cheeks—though she is too shy, and too short, to look anybody in the face. She sees the nearly toothless witch of a woman who birthed a child a week after her own, dancing with her hollow-cheeked man. No sore parts for her. She must have dropped the child as slick as if it were a rat, then given it to one or the other of her weedy-looking daughters to mind.

She sees Mr. Suter, the surgeon, out of breath, pulling away from a woman who would grab him, ducking through the dance and coming to greet her.

She wishes he would not. Now he will see who her father-in-law is; he may have to listen to the old fool's gabble. He will get a look at their drab, and now not even clean, country clothes. He will see her for what she is.

"So here you are," he says. "Here you are with your treasure."

It is not a word that Agnes has ever heard used to refer to a child. It seems as if he is talking to her in the way he might talk to a person of his own acquaintance, some sort of a lady, not as a doctor talks to a patient. Such behavior embarrasses her and she does not know how to answer.

"Your baby is well?" he says, taking a more down-to-earth tack. He is still catching his breath from the dancing, and his face is covered with a fine sweat.

"Aye."

"And you yourself? You have your strength again?"

She shrugs very slightly, so as not to shake the child off the nipple.

"You have a fine color, anyway. That is a good sign."

He asks then if she will permit him to sit and talk to her for a few moments, and once more she is confused by his formality but tells him that he may do as he likes.

Her father-in-law gives the surgeon—and her as well—a despising glance, but Mr. Suter does not notice it, perhaps does not even realize that the old man and the fair-haired boy who sits straight-backed facing the old man have anything to do with her.

"What will you do in Canada West?" he asks.

It seems to her the silliest question. She shakes her head—what can she say? She will wash and sew and cook and almost certainly suckle more children. Where that will be does not much matter. It will be in a house, and not a fine one.

She knows now that this man likes her, and in what way. She remembers his fingers on her skin. What harm can happen, though, to a woman with a baby at her breast? She feels stirred to show him a bit of friendliness.

"What will you do?" she says.

He smiles and says that he supposes he will go on doing what he has been trained to do, and that the people in America—so he has heard—are in need of doctors and surgeons, just like other people in the world.

"But I do not intend to get walled up in some city. I'd like to get as far as the Mississippi River, at least. Everything beyond the Mississippi used to belong to France, you know, but now it belongs to America and it is wide open—anybody can go there, except that you may run into the Indians. I would not mind that, either. Where there is fighting with the Indians, there'll be all the more need for a surgeon."

She does not know anything about this Mississippi River but she knows that Mr. Suter does not look like a fighting man himself—he does not look as if he could stand up in a quarrel with the brawling lads of Hawick, let alone red Indians.

Two dancers swing so close to them as to put a wind into their faces. It is a young girl, a child, really, whose skirts fly out—and who should she be dancing with but Agnes's brother-in-law Walter. Walter makes some sort of silly bow to Agnes and the surgeon and his father, and the girl pushes him and turns him around and he laughs at her. She is dressed like a young lady, with bows in her hair. Her face is lit up with enjoyment, her cheeks are glowing like lanterns, and she treats Walter with great familiarity, as if she had got hold of a large toy.

"That lad is your friend?" Mr. Suter says.

"No. He is my husband's brother."

The girl is laughing quite helplessly, as she and Walter—through her heedlessness—have almost knocked down another couple in the dance. She is not able to stand up for laughing, and Walter has to support her. Then it appears that she is not laughing but coughing. Walter is holding her against himself, half carrying her to the rail.

"There is one lass that will never have a child to her breast," Mr. Suter says, his eyes flitting to the sucking child before resting again on the girl. "I doubt if she will live long enough to see much of America. Does she not have anyone to look after her? She should not have been allowed to dance."

He stands up so that he can keep the girl in view as Walter holds her by the rail.

"There, she has stopped," he says.

"No hemorrhaging. At least not this time."

Agnes can see that he takes a satisfaction in the verdict he has passed on this girl. And it occurs to her that this must be because of some condition of his own—that he must be thinking that he is not so bad off by comparison.

There is a cry at the rail, nothing to do with the girl and Walter. Another cry, and many people break off dancing and rush to look at the water. Mr. Suter rises and goes a few steps in that direction, following the crowd, then turns back.

"A whale," he says. "They are saying there is a whale to be seen off the side."

"You stay here!" Agnes shouts in an angry voice, and he turns to her in surprise. But he sees that her words are meant for Young James, who is on his feet.

"This is your lad, then?" Mr. Suter exclaims, as if he had made a remarkable discovery. "May I carry him over to have a look?"

And that is how Mary—happening to raise her face in the crush of passengers—beholds Young James, much amazed, being carried across the deck in the arms of a hurrying stranger, a pale and determined dark-haired man who is surely a foreigner. A child stealer, or child murderer, heading for the rail.

She gives so wild a shriek that anybody would think she was in the Devil's clutches herself, and people make way for her as they would for a mad dog.

"Stop, thief! Stop, thief!" she is crying. "Take the boy from him. Catch him. James! James! Jump down!"

She flings herself forward and grabs the child's ankles, yanking him so that he howls in fear and outrage. The man bearing him nearly topples over but doesn't give him up. He holds on and pushes at Mary with his foot.

"Take her arms," he shouts to those around them. He is short of breath. "She is in a fit."

Andrew has pushed his way in, through people who are still dancing and people who have stopped to watch the drama. He manages somehow to get hold of Mary and Young James and to make clear that one is his son and the other his sister and that it is not a question of fits.

All is shortly explained with courtesies and apologies from Mr. Suter.

"I had just stopped for a few minutes' talk with your wife, to ask her if she was well," the surgeon says. "I did not take time to bid her goodbye, so you must do it for me."

Mary remains unconvinced by the surgeon's story. Of course he would have to say to Agnes that he was taking the child to look at the whale. But that does not make it the truth. Whenever the picture of that devilish man carrying Young James flashes through her mind, and she feels in her chest the power of her own cry, she is astonished and happy. It is still her belief that she has saved him.

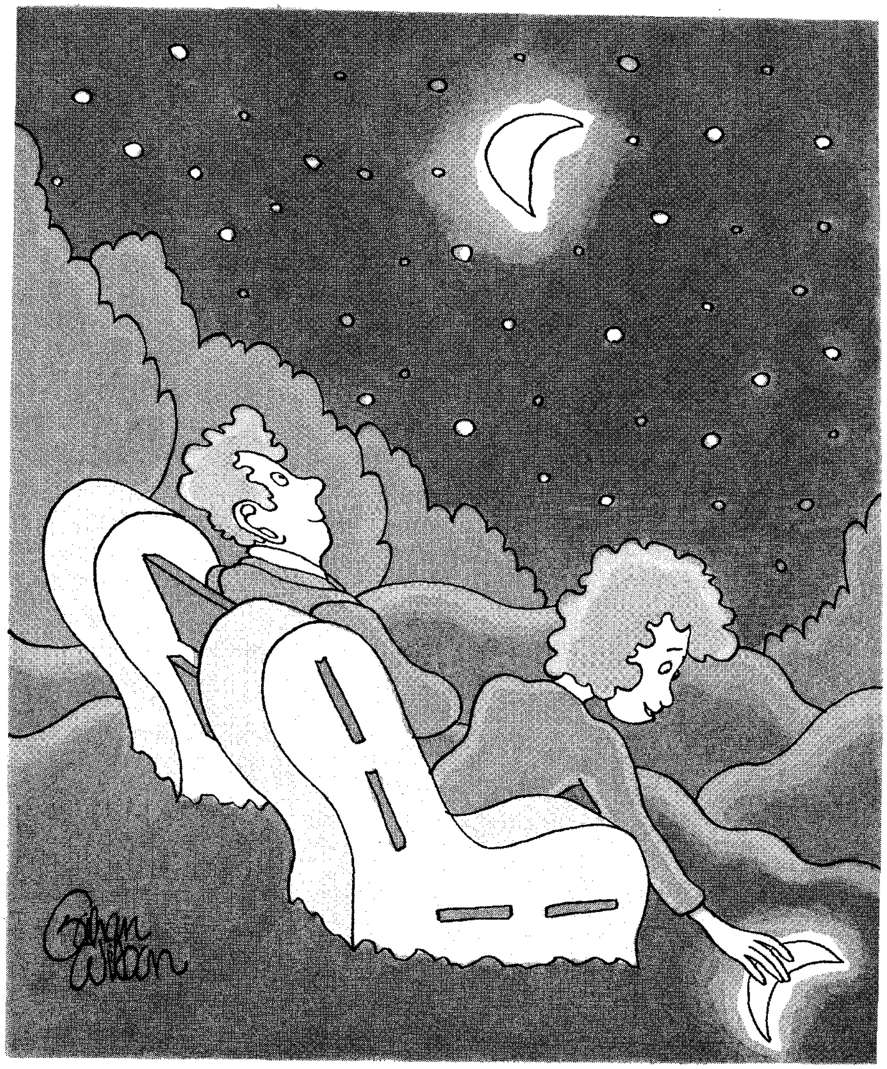
We were becalmed the 21st and 22nd but we had rather more wind the 23rd but in the afternoon were all alarmed by a squall of wind accompanied by thunder and lightning which was very terrible and we had one of our mainsails that had just been mended torn to rags again with the wind. The squall lasted about 8 or 10 minutes and the 24th we had a fair wind which sent us a good way up the River, where it became more strait so that we saw land on both sides of the River. But we becalmed again till the 31st when we had a breeze only two hours.

Nettie's father's name is Mr. Carbert. Sometimes he sits and listens to Nettie read or talks to Walter. The day after the dancing, when many people are in a bad humor from exhaustion and some from drinking whiskey, and hardly anybody bothers to look at the shore, he seeks Walter out to talk to him.

"Nettie is so taken with you," he says, "that she has got the idea that you must come along with us to Montreal."

He gives an apologetic laugh, and Walter laughs, too.

"Then she must think that Mon-



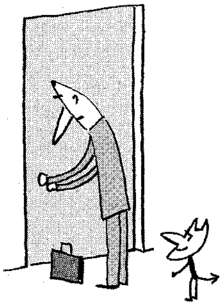
"Oh, look—here's the one from last night!"

treal is in Canada West," Walter says.

"No. No. I am not making a joke. I looked out for you on purpose when she was not with me. You are a fine companion for her and it makes her happy to be with you. And I can see that you are an intelligent lad and a prudent one and one who would do well in my office."

"I am with my father and my brother," Walter says, so startled that his voice has a youthful yelp in it. "We are going to get land."

"Well, then. You are not the only son your father has. There may not be enough good land for all of you. And you may not always want to be a farmer."



Walter tells himself that this is true.

"My daughter, now, how old do you think she is?"

Walter cannot think. He shakes his head.

"She is fourteen, nearly fifteen," Nettie's father says. "You would not think so, would you? But it does not matter—that is not what I am talking about. Not about you and Nettie, anything in years to come. You understand that? There is no question of years to come. But I would like for you to come with us and let her be the child that she is and make her happy now with your company. Then I would naturally want to repay you, and there would also be work for you in the office, and if all went well you could count on advancement."

Both of them at this point notice that Nettie is coming toward them. She sticks out her tongue at Walter, so quickly that her father apparently does not notice.

"No more now. Think about it and pick your time to tell me," her father says. "But sooner rather than later would be best."

Walter does not take long to make up his mind. He knows enough to thank Mr. Carbert, but says that he has not thought of working in an office, or at any indoor job. He means to work with his family until they are set up with land to farm and then when they do not need his help so much he thinks of being a trader to the Indians, a sort of explorer. Or a miner for gold.

"As you will," Mr. Carbert says. They walk several steps together, side by side. "I must say I had thought you were rather more serious than that. Fortunately, I said nothing to Nettie."

But Nettie has not been fooled as to the subject of their talks together. She pesters her father until he has to let her know how things have gone and then she seeks out Walter.

"I will not talk to you anymore from now on," she says, in a more grownup voice than he has ever heard from her. "It is not because I am angry but just because if I go on talking to you I will have to think all the time about how soon I'll be saying goodbye to you. But if I stop now I will have already said goodbye, so it will all be over sooner."

She spends the time that is left walking sedately with her father, in her finest clothes.

Walter feels sorry to see her—in these fine cloaks and bonnets she looks more of a child than ever, and her show of haughtiness is touching—but there is so much for him to pay attention to that he seldom thinks of her when she is out of sight.

Years will pass before she will reappear in his mind. But when she does he will find that she is a source of happiness, available to him till the day he dies. Sometimes he will even entertain himself with thoughts of what might have happened had he taken up the offer. He will imagine a radiant recovery, Nettie's acquiring a tall and maidenly body, their life together. Such foolish thoughts as a man may have in secret.

> Several boats from the land came alongside of us with fish, rum, live sheep, tobacco, etc. which they sold very high to the passengers. The 1st of August we had a slight breeze and on the morning of the 2nd we passed by the Isle of Orleans and about six in the morning we were in sight of Quebec in as good health I think as when we left Scotland. We are to sail for Montreal tomorrow in a steamboat.

> My brother Walter in the former part of this letter has written a large journal which I intend to sum up in a small ledger. We have had a very prosperous voyage being wonderfully preserved in health. We can say nothing yet about the state of the country. There is a great number of people landing here but wages is good. I can neither advise nor discourage people from coming. The land is very extensive and very thin-peopled. I think we have seen as much land as might serve all the people in Britain uncultivated and covered with wood. We will write you again as soon as settled.

When Andrew has added this paragraph, Old James is persuaded to add his signature to those of his two sons before the letter is sealed and posted to Scotland from Quebec. He will write nothing else, saying, "What does it matter to me? It cannot be my home, it can be nothing to me but the land where I will die."

"It will be that for all of us," Andrew says. "But when the time comes we will think of it more as a home."

"Time will not be given to me to do that."

"Are you not well, Father?"

"I am well and I am not."

Young James is now paying occasional attention to the old man, sometimes stopping in front of him and looking straight into his face, with a sturdy insistence.

"He bothers me," Old James says. "I don't like the boldness of him. He will go on and on and not remember a thing of Scotland, where he was born, or the ship he travelled on. He will get to talking another language the way they do when they go to England, only it will be worse than theirs. He looks at me with the kind of look that says he knows that me and my times is all over with."

"He will remember plenty of things," Mary says. Since the dancing and the incident of Mr. Suter she has grown more forthright within the family. "And he doesn't mean his look to be bold," she says. "It is just that he is interested in everything. He understands what you say, far more than you think. He takes everything in and he thinks about it."

Her eyes fill with tears of enthusiasm, but the others look down at the child with sensible reservations.

Young James stands in the midst of them—bright-eyed, fair, and straight. Slightly preening, somewhat wary, unnaturally solemn, as if he had indeed felt descend upon him the burden of the future.

The adults, too, feel the astonishment of the moment. It is as if they had been borne for these past six weeks not on a ship but on one great wave, which has landed them with a mighty thump on this bewildering shore. Thoughts invade their heads, wheeling in with the gulls' cries, their infidel commotion.

Mary thinks that she could snatch up Young James and run away into some part of the strange city of Quebec and find work as a sewing woman (talk on the boat has made her aware that such work is in demand). Then she could bring him up all by herself, as if she were his mother.

Andrew thinks of what it would be like to be here as a free man, without wife or father or sister or children, without a single burden on his back. What could he do then? He tells himself that it is no harm, surely, it is no harm to think about it.

Agnes has heard women on the boat say that the officers you see in the street here are surely the best-looking men anywhere in the world, and that they are ten or twenty times more numerous than the women. Which must mean that you can get what you want out of them—that is, marriage. Marriage to a man with enough money that you could ride in a carriage and send presents to your mother. If you were not married already and dragged down with two children.

Walter thinks that his brother is strong and Agnes is strong—she can help him on the land while Mary cares for the children. Who ever said that he should be a farmer? When they get to Montreal he will go and attach himself to the Hudson's Bay Company and they will send him to the frontier, where he will find riches as well as adventure.

Old James has sensed defection and begins to lament openly, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?"

These travellers lie buried—all but one of them—in the graveyard of Boston Church, in Esquesing, in Halton County, Ontario, almost within sight, and well within sound, of Highway 401, which at that spot, just a few miles from Toronto, may be the busiest road in Canada.

Old James is here. And Andrew and Agnes. Nearby is the grave of Mary, married after all and buried beside Robert Murray, her husband. Women were scarce and so were prized in the new country. She and Robert did not have any children together, but after Mary's early death he married another woman and with her he had four sons who lie here, dead at the ages of two, and three, and four, and thirteen. The second wife is here, too. Her stone says "Mother." Mary's says "Wife."

Agnes is here, having survived the births of many children. In a letter to Scotland, telling of the death of Old James in 1829 (a cancer, not much pain until near the end, though "it eat away a great part of his cheek and jaw"), Andrew mentions that his wife has been feeling poorly for the past three years. This may be a roundabout way of saying that during those years she bore her sixth, seventh, and eighth children. She must have recovered her health, for she lived into her eighties.

Andrew seems to have prospered, though he spread himself less than Walter, who married an American girl from Montgomery County, in New York State. Eighteen when she married him, thirty-three when she died after the birth of her ninth child. Walter did not marry again, but farmed successfully, educated his sons, speculated in land, and wrote letters to the government complaining about his taxes. He was able, before he died, to take a trip back to Scotland, where he had himself photographed wearing a plaid and holding a bouquet of thistles.

On the stone commemorating Andrew and Agnes there appears also the name of their daughter Isabel, who, like her mother, died an old woman.

Born at Sea.

Here, too, is the name of Andrew and Agnes's firstborn child, Isabel's elder brother.

Young James was dead within a month of the family's landing at Quebec. His name is here, but surely he cannot be. They had not yet taken up their land when he died; they had not even seen this place. He may have been buried somewhere along the way from Montreal to York or in that hectic new town itself. Perhaps in a raw temporary burying ground now paved over, perhaps without a stone in a churchyard, where other bodies would someday be laid on top of his. Dead of some mishap in the busy streets, or of a fever, or dysentery, or any of the ailments, the accidents, that were the common destroyers of little children in his time. ♦

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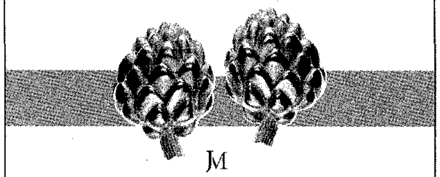

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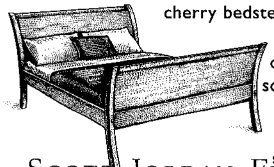

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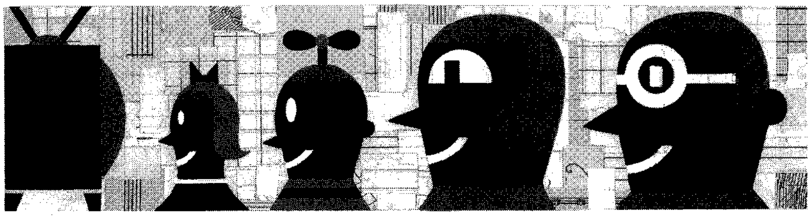


BOOKS

ART AS LIFE

The Matisse we never knew.

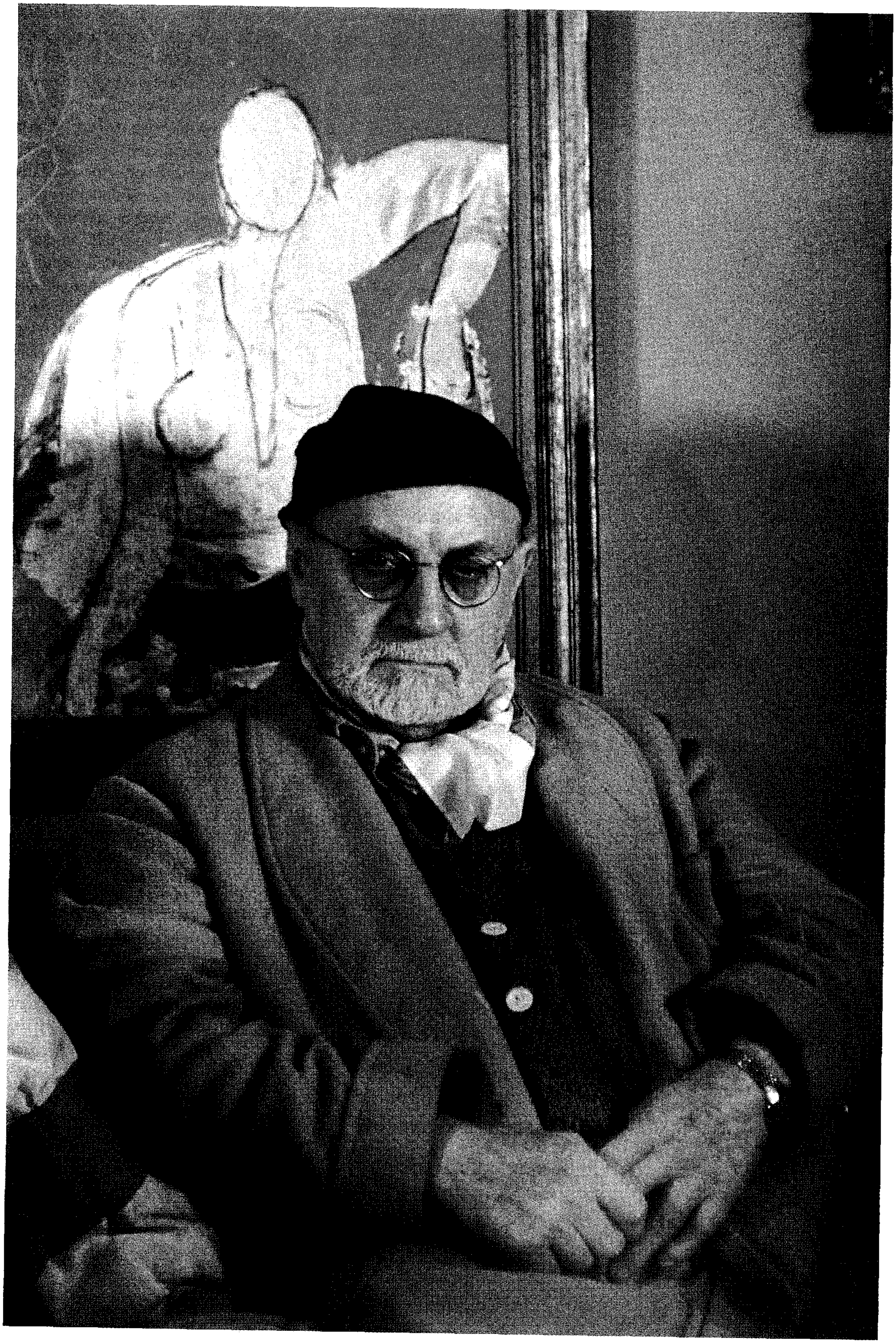
BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

Henri Matisse, unlike the other greatest modern painter, Pablo Picasso, with whom he sits on a seesaw of esteem, hardly exists as a person in most people's minds. One pictures a wary, bearded gent, owlish in glasses—perhaps with a touch of the pasha about him, from images of his last years in Vence, near Nice, in a house full of sumptuous fabrics, plants, freely flying birds, and comely young models. Many know that Matisse had something to do with the invention of Fauvism, and that he once declared, weirdly, that art should be like a good armchair. A few recall that, in 1908, he inspired the coinage of the term "cubism," in disparagement of a movement that would eclipse his leading influence on the Parisian avant-garde, and that he relaxed by playing the violin. Beyond such bits and pieces, there is the art, whose glory was maintained and renewed in many phases until the artist's death, in 1954: preternatural color, yielding line, boldness and subtlety, incessant surprise. Anyone who doesn't love it must have a low opinion of joy. The short answer to the question of Matisse's stubborn obscurity as a man is that he put everything interesting about himself into his work. The long answer, which is richly instructive, while ending in the same place, is given in Hilary Spurling's zestful two-volume biography, "A Life of Henri Matisse." The first volume, "The Unknown Matisse: The Early Years 1869-1908," was published in 1998. The second, "Matisse the Master: The Conquest of Colour 1909-1954" (Knopf; $40), completes the job of giving us a living individual, as familiar as someone we have long known, who regularly touched the spiritual core of Western modernity with a paintbrush.

Spurling is a veteran English theatre and literary critic and a biographer of Ivy Compton-Burnett. The fact that she is an amateur in art matters proves to be an advantage, given that she is also unfailingly sensitive and thoroughly informed. Matisse's greatness resides in capacities of the eye and the mind that almost anyone, with willingness, can discern, and no one, with whatever training, can really comprehend. I don't think it is possible to be more intelligent in any pursuit, or more serious and original, and with such suddenness, than Matisse was when he represented a reaching arm in "Dance I" (1909), or the goldfish that he painted as slivers of redness in a series of still-lifes in 1912. How can intellectual potency be claimed for an artist whose specialty, by his own declared ambition, was easeful visual bliss? It's a cinch, now that Spurling has cleared away a century's worth of misapprehensions and canards. Take, for example, the popular notion that Matisse was hedonistic. Hedonists seek pleasure. Matisse served it, as a monk serves God. He was a self-abnegating Northerner who lived only to work, and did so in chronic anguish, recurrent panic, and amid periodic breakdowns. Picasso recompensed himself, as he went along, with gratifications of intellectual and erotic play. Matisse did not. His art reserved nothing for himself. In an age of ideologies, Matisse dodged all ideas except perhaps one: that art is life by other means.

"The Unknown Matisse" told of an awkward youth from a dismal region of northern France—he was born in the cottage of his maternal grandmother, in 1869, and was raised in Bohain, an industrial textile center. He was an unhappy law clerk when, in 1889, he began to study drawing and, while laid up with appendicitis, was given a set of paints by his mother. The effect was seismic. He said later, "From the moment I held the box of colors in my hands, I knew this was my life. I threw myself into it like a beast that plunges towards the thing it loves." How much did he mean that? He meant it to the extent of warning his fiancée, Amélie Parayre, whom he married in 1898, when he was twenty-eight, "I love you dearly, mademoiselle; but I shall always love painting more." Amélie assented. She "had spent much of her life searching for a cause in which she could put her faith," Spurling writes. Her parents were ruined in a spectacular scandal, as the unsuspecting employees of a woman whose financial empire was based on fraud. Spurling attributes to Amélie's memories of that public disgrace a cocooning "suspicion of the outside world" that would always mark the Matisse family. (If there is any reason to doubt aspects of this book, it's the unprecedented coöperation that the author coaxed from the congenitally overprotective heirs.) Amélie and, later, Marguerite—a daughter Matisse had fathered with a shopgirl in 1894 and raised with Amélie—were strong-willed confederates of Matisse in his work, and severe critics when his concentration flagged, managing a virtual family firm of which the artist was both the fragile chairman and the slave-driven labor force. According to Spurling, "The family fitted their activities round his breaks and work sessions. Silence was essential." Even during the years when Matisse lived mostly alone in Nice, an "annual ritual of unpacking, stretching, framing and hanging ended with the whole family settling down to respond to the paintings." The conference might last several

Matisse in 1948: He threw himself into painting "like a beast that plunges towards the thing it loves." Photograph by Gisèle Freund.



days. Then the dealers were admitted.

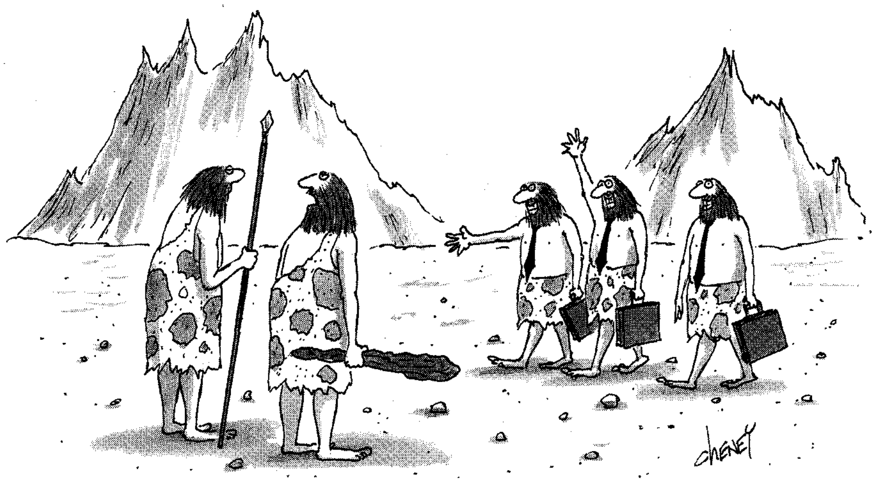
Matisse was not taught to paint; he just started doing it. His first two canvases, from 1890, are essentially consummate Old Master-ish still-lifes, the first one pretty good and the second, featuring opulent reds, a knockout. (Of the second painting, Spurling writes, "Digging this picture out of his father's attic ten years later, Matisse said it came so close to containing everything he had done since then that it hardly seemed worth having gone on painting." Twenty years later he had the same reaction to it, only stronger.) He had style before he had craft, which he picked up along the way by copying paintings in the Louvre and taking classes with, among others, the arch-academician Adolphe-William Bouguereau and the Symbolist Gustave Moreau. (His one art-schooled technical standby, almost a fetish, was the plumb line. No matter how odd the angles in any Matisse, the verticals are usually dead true.) Most of his early works employ a dark palette and tend to be gloomy, but each strives for an integral vision. Matisse was thirty-one years old when he began showing in Paris—in 1901, a year after Picasso, eleven years younger, arrived in town from Barcelona. (They met in April of 1906, at the salon of Gertrude and Leo Stein.) It was in 1905, in the Mediterranean town of Collioure, that Matisse, in close collaboration with André Derain, combined pointillist color and Cézanne's way of structuring pictorial space stroke by stroke to develop Fauvism—a way less of seeing the world than of feeling it with one's eyes.

"Matisse the Master" opens in 1909, with the Matisse family—which now included, in addition to Marguerite, two sons, Jean and Pierre—living in a former convent on the Boulevard des Invalides, in Paris, where the artist conducted a painting school. His immense notoriety, which had been confirmed in 1905-06 by "Le Bonheur de Vivre," a fractured fantasia that seemed to trash every possible norm of pictorial order and painterly finesse, was regularly exciting near-riots of derision in the public. ("My Arcadia," Matisse called the picture, which established his career's dizzying keynote: calm intensity or, perhaps, intense calm.) His huge-hipped, sinuous "Blue Nude," of 1907, discomfited even Picasso, who complained, "If he wants to make a woman, let him make a woman. If he wants to make a design, let him make a design. This is between the two." As usual, Picasso (then creating "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon," his own monumental riposte to "Le Bonheur de Vivre") was onto something: pattern was a decisive element in Matisse's kind of picture, which applied a passion for decorated fabrics that began in his childhood. But Picasso was loath to admit that the combined effects of ornamental rhythm and blooming flesh constituted a revolutionary correlative, and not a contradiction.

Picasso and Matisse are poles apart aesthetically. Matisse told his students, "One must always search for the desire of the line, where it wishes to enter, where to die away." Picasso's line has no desire; it is sheer will. Form builds in Picasso, flows in Matisse. Picasso uses color. Colors enter the world through Matisse like harmonies through Mozart. Young artists and intellectuals in Paris at that time overwhelmingly favored Picasso's analytical rigor, to the extent of attacking Matisse in print and snubbing him in public. Gertrude Stein (unlike her sister-in-law Sarah Stein, Matisse's first major collector) enjoyed ridiculing him, "reporting with satisfaction," Spurling says, "that her French cook served M. Matisse fried eggs for dinner instead of an omelette because, as a Frenchman, he would understand that it showed less respect." Matisse's intimate friends among artists were mostly easygoing minor painters, such as Albert Marquet. His temperamental aloneness made him prey to vertiginous depressions. He later recalled a breakdown that he underwent in Spain, in 1910: "My bed shook, and from my throat came a little high-pitched cry that I could not stop."

Matisse himself precipitated the most significant and indelible controversy of his career. In 1908, in a famous text, "Notes of a Painter," he stated as his ideal an art "for every mental worker, for the businessman as well as the man of letters, for example, a soothing, calming influence on the mind, something like a good armchair which provides relaxation from physical fatigue." At the end of "The Unknown Matisse," Spurling writes that the metaphor "has done him more harm ever since than any other image he might have chosen." Straining to defend it, she hazards that "this passage reflects its obverse—Matisse's intimate acquaintance with violence and destruction, a sense of human misery sharpened by years of humiliation, rejection and exposure—which could be neutralised only by the serene power and stable weight of art." This tack strikes me as unnecessary, on two counts. First, in general, the principle of Matisse's armchair seems ever sounder in comparison to more stirring but ultimately vain programs of modern art. If "modernism" had any effective purpose beyond acclimating cultivated people to rapid worldly change, it was a bust. Second, in particular, the tired businessman whom Matisse most likely had in mind was no Babbitt but almost a co-producer of some of the artist's greatest works, the Russian textile magnate and visionary collector Sergei Ivanovich Shchukin, who wrote to him in 1910, "The public is against you, but the future is yours." "Dance II" (1910) and "Music" (1910), heraldic mural-size slabs of resonating minor-key red, green, and blue, fulfilled commissions for Shchukin's house in Moscow, which by 1914 contained thirty-seven Matisses—"He always picked the best," the artist said—in history's first dedicated museum of modern art. (Lenin expropriated the collection in person but allowed Shchukin to remain, in servants' quarters, as caretaker and guide. He died in Paris, in 1936. The collection is now in the Hermitage and Pushkin Museums.)

Among Matisse's students was Olga Meerson, a Russian Jew who had studied with Wassily Kandinsky in Munich and, already possessed of an elegant style, sought to remake herself under Matisse's tutelage. Her talent is as apparent as her emulation of him, in a charming 1911 portrait, that shows him reclining on a checkered bedspread, reading a book with amused eyes. Spurling writes, "She personified the pride, courage and resilience that he responded to all his life at the deepest instinctual level in his female models." She also epitomized a period type of "self-reliant single girl," an obsessive subject for Matisse in those years, which Spurling locates between the earlier heroines of Henry James and the later solitaries of Jean Rhys. Matisse's 1911 portrait of Meerson shows a primly dressed and posed, tremblingly sensitive woman slashed with "two fierce black arcs—plunging from neck to thigh, and from armpit to buttock," which resist any explanation aside from their sheerly formal éclat. Spurling loses me when she hesitates to concede a sexual relationship. The body language in two group photographs from 1911 testifies that Amélie scented the worst. (In one, nearly everyone faces the camera except Meerson, who stares at Amélie, and Amélie, who carefully gazes at nothing.) A combination of Amélie's jealousy and Meerson's peremptory neediness caused a severely rattled Matisse to end the connection, with a maximum of bad feeling all around. Meerson moved to Munich, where she married the musician Heinz Pringsheim, a brother-in-law of Thomas Mann. Never having fulfilled her promise as a painter, she committed suicide in Berlin, in 1929.



"They're harmless as long as you don't sign anything."

• •

But the Matisses' marriage ran afoul not of any romantic rival but of the artist's growing will to stand, however precariously, on his own. A climax came in 1913, when Amélie sat more than a hundred times for the "Portrait of Madame Matisse," a thunderous painting, in drenching blues and greens, of a chic and stony woman leaning forward in a chair, with a black-featured gray mask of a face. ("Saturday with Matisse," a friend's diary reported at the time. "Crazy! weeping! By night he recites the Lord's Prayer! By day he quarrels with his wife!") Spurling says that the portrait, which was the last work to enter Shchukin's collection, caused Matisse "palpitations, high blood pressure and a constant drumming in his ears." Such frenzy was not rare when Matisse had difficulty with a painting, but in this case it was compounded by something like exorcism. The portrait expresses no specific feeling but, rather, registers innumerable emotions, not excluding tenderness. The game tilt of Amélie's small head, sporting a dainty ostrich-feather toque, could break your heart. He referred to the painting years later in a letter to her as "the one that made you cry, but in which you look so pretty."

One well believes Spurling that life with Matisse could be "close to unendurable," but enduring it had been Amélie's vocation, through years of impoverished existence in studio-centered homes. What eroded her role was security, which Shchukin's patronage provided, along with a big suburban house in Issy-les-Moulineaux, where the family moved in 1909, and from which Matisse was increasingly absent. (In 1930, his travels took him to the United States, where he was thrilled by New York, and to Tahiti, where his melancholic character drew comment from a new friend, the German filmmaker F. W. Murnau: "Shadows are rare here. There's sunshine everywhere except on you.") Matisse continued to depend on Amélie, just not enough. Sulkily, she ceded routine leadership of the family to Marguerite. The 1913 portrait was his last painting of her. The couple finally split in 1939, when Amélie tried to dismiss the coolly efficient young Lydia Delectorskaya, an orphan refugee from Siberia who, having been hired as Amélie's companion, increasingly served the ailing master as model, assistant, and nurse. Delectorskaya reacted to being banished (among other sorrows, which included a thwarted ambition to study medicine) by shooting herself in the chest with a pistol, to remarkably slight effect. Soon the artist and his wife were legally separated and Delectorskaya was back. Phlegmatic in the face of the family's icy resentment, the Russian said of Matisse, "He knew how to take possession of people and make them feel they were indispensable. That was how it was for me, and that was how it had been for Mme. Matisse."

Spurling, in her preface to "Matisse the Master," announces an intention to demolish "two standard assumptions, both false." The first, which is, indeed, common, concerns "the supposedly exploitative relationship" that Matisse had with the women he painted. The second, which was bruited in 1992 by an American art historian, Michèle C. Cone, in a book on artists in Vichy France, is less often heard, and involves, according to Spurling, "baseless but damaging allegations about Matisse's behavior in World War II." In answer to the first charge, Spurling—backed by access to Matisse's immense correspondence, among other previously withheld archives—contends that the artist, after his marriage, rarely, if ever, had sex with models, despite his keen feelings for many. In this, Spurling is up against a climate of cynical received opinion. I'm one of numerous critics on record as being certain, based on no evidence, that Matisse womanized during his decades in Nice, which started with seasonal sojourns in 1917, when he lived in hotel rooms painting naked or harem-garbed models who, Spurling writes, "were drawn from the tide of human flotsam washed up in Nice between the wars." Matisse never disavowed, in principle, the libertarian anarchism of most of his avant-garde generation. Nor did he seem to share the wintry belief of Piet Mondrian, quoted by Spurling, that "a drop of sperm spilt is a masterpiece lost." He would visit brothels, though apparently without enthusiasm. ("Not much fun," he said.) But I discover ready support for Spurling's arguments in my own experience of the Nice odalisques, who loll on chairs or chaises amid flowers, fruits, and sumptuous fabrics. Indubitably erotic, the pictures diffuse arousal.

Their sensuality never fixates on a breast or a thigh but dilates to every square inch of canvas. Such is the character of Matisse's formal radicalism, early and late: distributed energy, suspended gesture, deferred climax. Might the tension have been so precious to him, as the engine of what gave his life meaning, that its only end could be exhaustion? It may count that, according to Matisse, he never ate even the fresh food that he used for still-lifes—including oysters, from a restaurant in Nice, that were returned in time for the lunch crowd.

Spurling associates the Vichy charge with a "popular image of the painter indulging himself among the fleshpots of Nice in wartime," which is absurd on its face. During the war, Matisse was isolated in Nice and Vence. He was old and ill with cardiovascular, renal, and abdominal disorders; he underwent a colostomy in 1941 and, a year later, almost died. Cone bases a speculation that Matisse "sided with the nationalism of the current Vichy regime" on a mild complaint by the artist, back in 1924, that people were mistaking, as French, the cosmopolitan art scene in Paris. ("French painters are not cosmopolites," he told a Danish interviewer—an observation, largely accurate, about the Parisian avant-garde of the twenties.) Beyond that, Cone primarily cites wartime interviews, in which Matisse chatted amiably about his work, as evidence of irresponsible disengagement. It's true that he shielded his art from politics under all circumstances—he created the reverberant domestic idyll "The Piano Lesson" (my favorite twentieth-century painting) in the summer of 1916, while death swaggered at Verdun. But there seems to be no gainsaying his at least passive solidarity with the Resistance, which swept up the two most important women in his life—Amélie, who was a typist for the Communist underground, and Marguerite, who served as a courier—as well as his son Jean, who was involved in sabotage operations. (Pierre had by that time become an art dealer in New York.) Amélie was jailed for six months; Marguerite was tortured by the Gestapo but escaped from a cattle car that was stalled on its way to a prison camp in Germany during the war's chaotic waning months. The artist's loyalty to the poet and leading Communist Louis Aragon, who, while on the run, spent time with Matisse and wrote passionately about him, also weighs in his favor.

Matisse was so consumed by aesthetic sensibility that his responses to life, when not baffled and distraught, were like unwitting prose poems. Asked to recommend a possible mate for Jean, he sized up one young woman as "tall, well made, limbs a bit long—sprawling movements like a young dog—intelligent, very gifted and very reserved." His habits were incredibly regular. On a typical day in Nice, in 1917, Spurling tells us, he "rose early and worked all morning with a second work session after lunch, followed by violin practice, a simple supper (vegetable soup, two hard-boiled eggs, salad and a glass of wine) and an early bedtime." Spurling knows her man so well that you readily tolerate her occasional reading of his mind: "By the seventeenth it was so hot he stayed indoors all day, drawing fruit, reading or dozing on the studio couch, feeling his feet swell and thinking about his 'Still Life with Green Sideboard.'" (As anyone might: that quiet painting, from 1928, is one of the most uncannily ambiguous ever made; you cannot decide if you are looking at or into the surface of a cabinet door.) He had warm but awkward dealings with his sons, realizing late in life that he had burdened them with the sort of hectoring pressures to meet his standards that he had suffered from his own father. Pierre said of the boy in "The Piano Lesson," "Yes, it was me, and you have no idea how much I detested those piano lessons." The one person who could command Matisse's attention was Marguerite. She had married a brilliant man of letters, Georges Duthuit, who was Matisse's best critic in his lifetime; when Duthuit proved unfaithful to her, the artist forbade him to write about his work. Matisse is never so affecting as in his account of the two weeks that Marguerite spent with him after her escape in 1945: "I saw in reality, materially, the atrocious scenes she described and acted out for me. I couldn't have said if I still belonged to myself."

Matisse spoke with self-knowledge both sad and ruthless—on behalf of driven artists in general—when, in a 1941 letter to Pierre, he referred to a harrowing recent painting by his friend Georges Rouault: "A man who makes pictures like the one we were looking at is an unhappy creature, tormented day and night. He relieves himself of his passion in his pictures, but also in spite of himself on the people round him. That is what normal people never understand. They want to enjoy the artists' products—as one might enjoy cows' milk—but they can't put up with the inconvenience, the mud and the flies."

The last decade and a half of Matisse's life, spent mostly as an invalid, was a bonus gift of time—"a second life," he called it—in which, deciding that he had gone as far as he could with oil painting, he invented and developed a new kind of art. His compositions of paper cutouts included the 1947 book "Jazz," and designs for Catholic vestments to go with his total design of a convent chapel in Vence—an improbable, gruelling commission, including seventeen stained-glass windows and several nearly abstract murals, that was arranged with help from a favorite former model, who had become a nun, and an idealistic young monk who came to remark, "I feel less and less Gothic, and more and more Matisse." The project horrified not only much of the Catholic hierarchy but also a contemporary art world then largely in thrall to Communism. (Picasso is often said to have recommended that Matisse decorate a brothel instead. Actually, he proposed a fruit-and-vegetable market, to which Matisse "was proud of snapping back that his greens were greener and his oranges more orange than any actual fruit.") But such was Matisse's prestige, with the added advantage that the artist largely financed the project himself, that the chapel opened in 1951 in a ceremony led by the Archbishop of Nice. At first bewildered by the chapel, the sisters of the convent came to love its chaste serenity and effulgent color. "From now on," Spurling writes, "indignant or derisive sightseers demanding to know the meaning of the stations of the cross received a firm response from the nun in charge: 'It means modern.'"

Matisse's cutouts realized a brilliant conjunction of drawing and color which had always been implicit in his art—often, as if his lines were not the container of his color but the edge produced by its expansion, like the contour of wetness left by a wave on a beach. Formed with scissors, color and shape become effectively one.

In his house, luxuriant with simple amenities and living things, he "exercised dominion . . . from his bed," Spurling writes. "Models and assistants were jealously guarded, cut off from outside contact and more or less confined to the premises." Picasso, accompanied by his lover, Françoise Gilot, was a frequent and welcome visitor. While still fencing with each other like old duellists, they talked art. (Gilot remembered one occasion when Matisse, producing American catalogues of the work of Pollock and Robert Motherwell, asked Picasso, "What do you think they have incorporated from us? And in a generation or two, who among the painters will still carry a part of us in his heart, as we do Manet and Cézanne?") Matisse died at the age of eighty-four, on November 3, 1954, with Marguerite and Delectorskaya at his side. Spurling reports that Delectorskaya "left immediately with the suitcase she had kept packed for fifteen years."

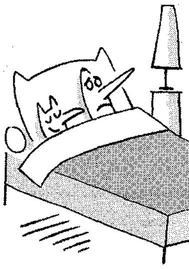
If Spurling fails to make one important element sufficiently clear, it's the connection between the peculiarities of Matisse's life and his singularity, which is also his absolute modernity, as an artist. The key fact is his self-invention as a painter, entering art history from essentially nowhere, as if by parachute. Never having had traditional lessons to unlearn (unlike Picasso, with his incessant industry of demolishing and reconstructing the inherited language of painting), Matisse innovated on something like whim—a privilege, without guidelines or guarantees, for which he paid a steep toll in anxiety. There is even a touch of the naïf or the primitive about him, though it is hard to grasp, because his works quickly assumed the status of classics, models of the modern. You can track his inspirations, seeing, for example, that his discovery of Russian icons, during a visit to Shchukin in Moscow in 1911, informed a large confrontational painting of him and Amélie, "The Conversation" (1911). But how does this marital anecdote (the great man in pajamas!) manage to impress as an all-time symbol of creativity? Matisse couldn't say, and no one else can, either. The circumstances of his life and time, as detailed in this appropriately capacious biography, continually distill into drops of wonder. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Poets and Poetry

Starred Wire, *by Ange Mlinko (Coffee House; $15).* Mlinko has said that she prefers her poems "layered and loaded up," and, in her second book, lines like "Freezing the rapidly flowing global language into spun sugar gardens" show you exactly what she's talking about. Thick with knotty words and bizarre juxtapositions, these poems dissolve syntax and estrange language from conventional meaning. Some passages recall Surrealist forebears—"Schoolkids jumping the jellyfish fences / Wearing cranberry jackets / Through the paisley briars and stars"—and poems such as "Bon Nuit, Bunny" create charming, musical repetitions. Mlinko's most obvious influence is the conversational, paratactic style of Frank O'Hara, but her intoxicating, cerebral poems display a unique sense of humor and mystery.

A Word Like Fire: Selected Poems, *by Dick Barnes, edited by Robert Mezey (Handsel; $17).* There are no unnecessary words in these poems, and no unnecessary poems in this book. Barnes, who died in 2000, at the age of sixty-eight, seems to have written a poem only when he had something to say. The occasions are mostly personal and local, the personal being, often, skirmishes and truces in the war between men and women, and the local being the "other" Southern California—the mountains and the desert east of Los Angeles. This is where Barnes grew up, and where he spent his career, teaching at Pomona College. The poems are lightly spiced with mysticism, though mysticism in the way of the Beats—an honest man's recognition that the world is a little weird. What makes them extraordinary is something else: the naturalness of the voice, a vocabulary and a tone so "spoken" that the minute you finish a poem you want to read it again, just to see how he did it.



Love, Amy: The Selected Letters of Amy Clampitt, *edited by Willard Spiegelman (Columbia; $39.50).* Composed over a forty-four year period, Clampitt's letters are written in a markedly different voice from that of her intricate, highly learned poems. Here we get her recipe for granola, her thoughts on proper attire for Manhattan parties ("Being underdressed is the best way of keeping one's perspective"), and her complaints about literary types ("miserable") and "Paradise Lost" ("dull and pompous"). Clampitt achieved recognition for her writing late in life, and it is fascinating to learn of the many things she was doing before then, such as getting jailed for participating in political protests. Her letters are suffused with an inexorable optimism, devoid of any tinge of writerly melancholy or self-pity. At the age of thirty-three, Clampitt wrote to her youngest brother, "Why are people so afraid of being enthusiastic?"

A Poet's Prose: Selected Writings of Louise Bogan, *edited by Mary Kinzie (Swallow; $19.95).* Long out of print, the essays and letters of the poet Louise Bogan—this magazine's poetry reviewer for thirty-eight years—are returned to us, as witty and serious as ever, accompanied by a few works of short fiction and some incidental, uncollected poems. Jamesian in her intricacy of impression, though more colloquial in her syntax, Bogan was equally quick to praise and to excoriate. (About Martha Graham as Clytemnestra, in a 1961 performance, Bogan writes, "Graham made her into a sort of skulking middle-aged frump, in a bun-on-top hairdo and a damned black tea gown.") While writing about all the arts helped clarify Bogan's aesthetics, poetry remained her vocation, and the best pieces here include readings of Auden, Yeats, and Lorca, who, she says, "had a right to Surrealism."

THE THEATRE

THE BALLAD OF JOHN

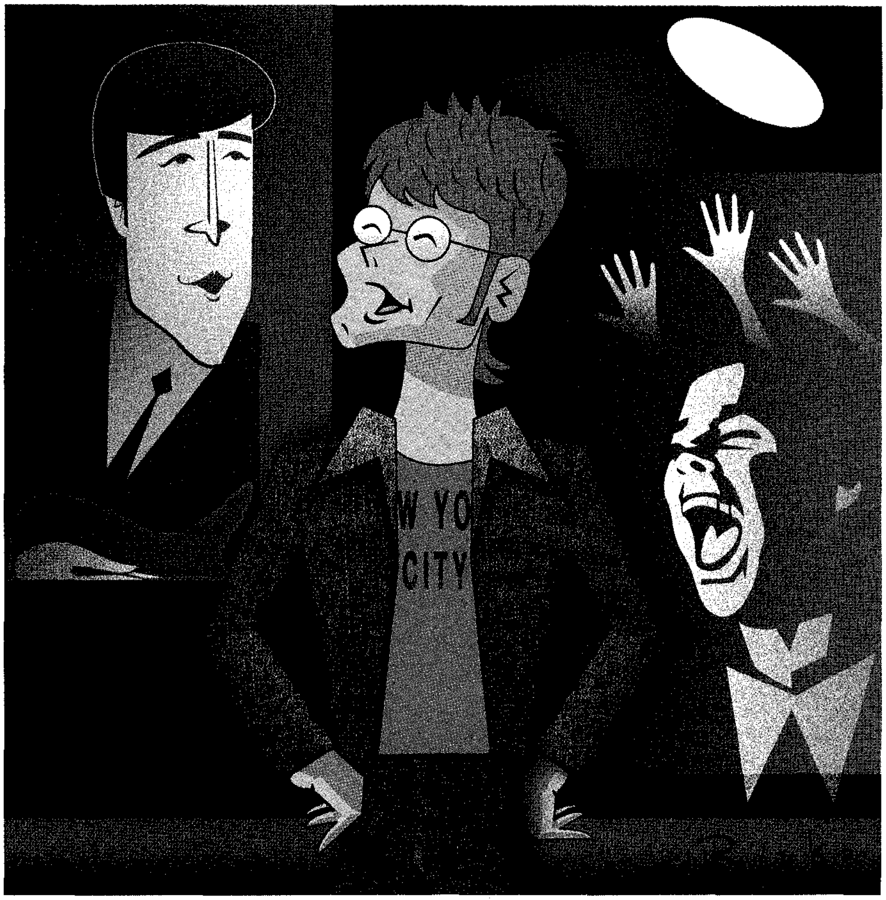
"Lennon" and "Dedication or The Stuff of Dreams."

BY HILTON ALS

For many of the artists and musicians who came of age in a post-Beatles, post-John Lennon late-nineteen-eighties New York, it was Yoko Ono, and not her martyred husband, who had greater cultural resonance. With the release of her retrospective CD collection, "Onobox," in 1992, Ono demonstrated what a forceful, distinctive avant-gardist she was. Stretching the parameters of the traditional Japanese vocal and combining the result with John Cage-influenced experiments in electronic sound, Ono was a tougher, less melodic Meredith Monk: a musical futurist with a learned, albeit improvisatory, approach to the studio—indeed, to the whole concept of being an artist. Small wonder, then, that Lennon, the most intellectual Beatle, upon meeting Ono at an exhibition of her installation work in London, in 1966, was impressed by this woman, who had everything he didn't: a rich and cultivated family, an education, an avant-garde pedigree, and an appealingly limited relationship to the late-twentieth-century culture that Lennon and his bandmates had helped to define.

While the creators of "Lennon" (at the Broadhurst) spend some time on the Ono-Lennon collaborations, the show—or, rather, the revue—focusses, in standard musical-bio fashion, on Liverpool's "working-class hero" as he makes his way from the cradle to the grave, from his "Twist and Shout" days with the Beatles to his career as a solo artist, producing such ballads of white-male sensitivity as "How Do You Sleep?," "Give Peace a Chance," "Woman," and "Beautiful Boy." Conceived and directed by Don Scardino, who also wrote the book, "Lennon" presents nine performers in the title role, most of whom address the audience directly as their character's tale unfolds. By casting several actors as Lennon, Scardino means to highlight his protagonist's multiple personae: musician, activist, prankster, TV guest, stay-at-home dad, etc. But the conceit fails, mainly because Scardino seems less interested in the subtleties of interpreting a life story than in putting on a very, very big show with a very, very loud sound system. The actors are forced to compete with the bombast simply in order to be heard. Among the show's better performers—all of whom struggle with the dreary costuming, the Lennon-by-way-of-Ethel Merman arrangements, and the many screens onto which images from Lennon's real life are projected—are Marcy Harriell, Julia Murney, Chad Kimball, Will Chase, and Chuck Cooper. Only Cooper, who has a dignity and playfulness that seem to belong to another show altogether, manages to rise above the outrageous typecasting that goes on here. One especially uncomfortable moment occurs when Harriell sings "Woman Is the Nigger of the World." Light-skinned and curly-haired, she rips the roof off the song. But did Scardino *have* to give the song to a black woman? Murney—who is white, and a strong, capable actress—would have done just as well with the material, but in a less obvious way.

Obviousness, however, is Scardino's goal. He wants "Lennon" to be a Broadway hit—a sadder "Ain't Misbehavin'." The only way he could have made this show better would have been to make it a different show, one that focussed, for instance, on the marriage of minds between John and Yoko, which yielded so many complicated songs and sound pieces and political statements—as well as provoking a series of confused and often racist responses in the press. For that story, you'll have to look elsewhere.



Beatlemania: Will Chase as one of the nine faces of Lennon on Broadway.

ROBERT RISKO

In Terrence McNally's best work, theatre—or, more specifically, the artifice inherent in all social interaction—plays as much of a role as his often outrageous subject matter. A campier John Van Druten, McNally writes well-made plays that work. At the same time, one senses the anxiety behind his need to please. When he doesn't succeed, the viewer leaves the theatre—as I did after seeing his hackneyed 1994 Tony Award-winning hit, "Love! Valour! Compassion!"—feeling almost guilty, as though he personally had let McNally down. Criticizing McNally is a little like criticizing a willfully adorable child: you end up feeling like a creep.

It takes an intelligent actor to cut through McNally's clever and essentially sentimental view of the world and get to the heart of his various stories, which usually revolve around a secret—sickness, sadism, queerness, or all of the above. As the beleaguered yet hopeful waitress in the 2002 revival of McNally's two-character study "Frankie and Johnny in the Clair de Lune," Edie Falco was powerful because she believed in the character: watching her was like listening to a village storyteller spin a yarn slowly, deliberately, and with love. Unfortunately, Marian Seldes, as the rich, ailing, and arch Annabelle Willard in McNally's current offering, "Dedication or The Stuff of Dreams" (a Primary Stages production at 59E59), has no font of naturalism to draw on, either in the text or within herself. She is simply reprising a role—that of the trite and amusing jewel-encrusted dragon—that we've seen her play before, in a number of plays by Edward Albee (notably in the 2001 Broadway production of "The Play About the Baby").

We first encounter Mrs. Willard when she goes to meet Jessie and Lou (Alison Fraser and Nathan Lane) at a dusty, dilapidated space she owns, which they want to turn into a children's theatre. (They're not lovers, but are romantically involved.) Mrs. Willard doesn't like children and she doesn't like theatre. However, she agrees to let the couple use the building if Lou—the softer of the two—will grant her two wishes. Her first wish is that Lou twirl for her. (As it happens, Mrs. Willard has overheard a speech of Lou's in which he confided in the audience—whom he addresses as "children"—about his childhood pastime. "When I was your age, I didn't have a theatre in my life," he explained. "I had to invent one of my own. I had a mirror, my mother's closet, and music. I'm telling you a secret now. . . . I would go to my mother's closet and take out her fullest skirt. I would put on the music I loved the best . . . and start to twirl in front of the mirror.") Mrs. Willard's second wish is that Lou put her out of her misery (she is terminally ill) by killing her. Lou's eventual response to these wishes grants Mrs. Willard a form of relief that is both palatable and touching, in a role that rarely allows for either quality.

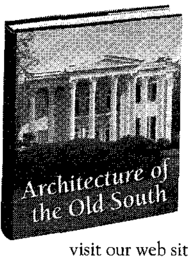
As directed by Michael Morris, the scenes in which Mrs. Willard wields her power and Lou grapples with his moral quandary and humiliation are skillfully done. And Darren Pettie as Toby Cassidy, the alternately masochistic and butch roadie lover of Jessie's rock-star daughter, is wonderful. Ultimately, though, it's Morris, not McNally, who allows us to feel something: he mines the actors' body language as well as the pauses between gags for whatever complexity he can convey beyond McNally's talk, talk, talk. Despite his efforts, we are scarcely given a moment to consider who these characters are, what emotions they might be experiencing, or what we might actually feel about them. McNally is remarkably deft at keeping his dramaturgical balls in the air, but the time we take to marvel at his deftness is time we're not spending thinking about his characters.

When, at the end of the play, Lou's dream has come true, and he and Jessie have established their children's theatre, we see Lou performing in a children's play, wearing a bunny suit. It's a cheap sight gag, and it robs us of anything we might previously have felt for him. Lane, it seems, brings out the worst in McNally, with whom he has collaborated on a number of productions. Together, they're cute on top of cute—wicked children who promise us one thing (theatrical truth) while delivering another (artifice). With a sly smile, they hand us a cookie, but it's a cookie filled with dust. ♦

From the Litchfield (Conn.) Inquirer.

In addition to the change to renovating the gymnasium, the committee also cut back on some of the new construction at the intermediate school, and the cafeteria is to be moved from under the gymnasium to behind the cafeteria.

Amazing the money they save that way.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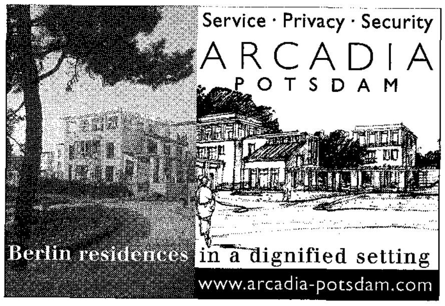
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MUSICAL EVENTS

A LITTLE LATE-NIGHT MUSIC

Mostly Mozart reborn.

BY ALEX ROSS

A decade ago, the Mostly Mozart Festival, Lincoln Center's venerable summertime series, was offering some of the dullest concerts in the Western Hemisphere. I remember a performance of Mozart's Flute Concerto in D, with Jean-Pierre Rampal as the soloist and Gerard Schwarz conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, which was positively bureaucratic in its self-satisfied mediocrity, as if it were being piped in from a department of motor vehicles in Leonid Brezhnev's Russia. I briefly considered abandoning music criticism for cat-sitting.

In the mid-nineteen-nineties, with the advent of the multidisciplinary, hipper-than-thou Lincoln Center Festival, many people assumed that the older series would fall by the wayside. Instead, Mostly Mozart has undergone a mildly shocking rejuvenation. The programming now includes period-instrument ensembles, dance (the Mark Morris Dance Group performed its masterpiece "L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato" last week), even world music (Kayhan Kalhor, the *kamancheh* virtuoso, appeared last summer). Late-night concerts have been added, and a new stage has been installed at Avery Fisher Hall. The orchestra, which draws on New York's inexhaustible supply of skilled freelancers, hasn't changed all that much; half the musicians on the roster were in the group a decade ago. But they're now playing with a youthful edge, finding threads of novelty in some of the world's most familiar music.

The guiding spirit of Mostly Mozart 2.0 is Louis Langrée, who took over from Schwarz as music director in 2002, having made his name at the Glyndebourne Festival. An amiable-looking fellow with tousled hair, Langrée conducts in a collarless white tunic, which makes him look something like a celebrity chef. His style is at once warm and sharp; he is plainly liked by the players, yet he is able to steer them out of the eddies of harmonious routine. He has a neat way of etching the beginnings and ends of phrases, so that Mozart's heavenly paragraphs don't devolve into dulcet murmuring. In the first movement of the "Haffner" Symphony, for example, a pattering eighth-note figure at the end of a measure is given a marked articulation, so that it drives into the next bar with a kind of piston action. In the same movement, upward scales in the strings are dramatized with quick, flaring crescendos. All through the scores, decorative details become pulses of energy, flexings of musical muscle. At the same time, Langrée avoids the bad habit of incessantly poking at the music as if it were almost dead.

The theme of this summer's festival—it ends on August 27th, with the Mass in C Minor—is "Travelling with Mozart." We follow the composer on various revenue-generating trips to Paris, Prague, and London; we sample music from each country and hear Mozart's works interpreted by native ensembles and soloists. At times, the attempt to keep the governing theme afloat results in awkward intellectual calisthenics. When the Gabrieli Consort of London, under the direction of Paul McCreesh, played Mozart's great G-Minor Symphony, the program annotator ventured that the work was somehow English in nature. I'd have guessed we were in Italy; the performance was winningly fleet and graceful, devoid of the Romantic histrionics that conductors sometimes bring to this piece. Mozart was, in fact, music's perfect cosmopolitan: wherever he went, there he was.

The festival also wants to shake up conventional patterns of programming, in an effort to simulate the wildly varied concerts of Mozart's time. In the opening weeks, concert and opera arias enlivened the usual procession of overture, concerto, and symphony, and a

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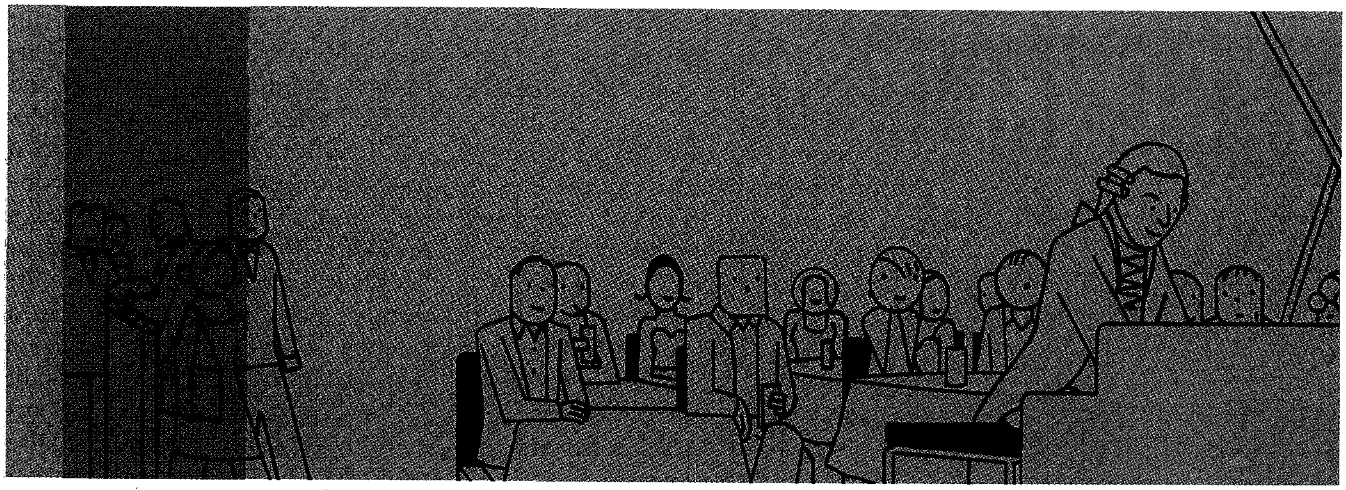
handsome parade of sopranos delivered them. Renée Fleming, who sang at the opening-night gala, gave evidence of having headlined one gala too many: she rendered a group of Handel arias in an unintelligible, mannered style. The diva-in-chief was followed by a posse of younger women who were determined to make an impression. Emma Bell sang Mozart's "Ah, lo previdi . . . Ah, t'in-vola agl'occhi miei" with gleaming intonation and a buoyant personality; the aria is a howl of fury, but Bell had fun with it. Sally Matthews gave dramatic heft to "Ch'io mi scordi di te . . . Non temer, amato bene." And Erin Wall, a young Canadian, sang "Bella mia fiamma . . . Resta, o cara" with grace and fire, showing the sort of righteous rage that would make for a great Donna Anna. I hope someone from the Met was taking notes.

Since Avery Fisher Hall opened, in 1962, various wizards have tried to fix the erratic acoustics and consuming blandness of the place. The prime innovation of this summer's Mostly Mozart Festival has been to put in place a temporary "Mozart stage," which goes some way toward humanizing the room. If the New York Philharmonic is smart, it will bring back the new arrangement. The musicians now play on a Brazilian bloodwood platform that extends thirty feet into the audience. There is extra seating to the side and in back of the ensemble. The sound isn't quite voluptuous, but it's fuller and richer than it was before: an array of overhead baffles helps to bring focus. If you sit in the "courtside" areas, you are practically inside the orchestra. You get to see the body language of the musicians: a congratulatory nudge to a violinist who has finessed a broken string; a sympathetic pat on the knee to an oboist whose reed starts squawking in the summer heat; Langrée's inviting glances and grateful smiles. You also notice that the triangle is incredibly loud for its size.



This year's festival echoed the wildly varied concerts of Mozart's time.

The late-night concerts take place in the Kaplan Penthouse, ten floors above Lincoln Center Plaza. A space usually reserved for institutional powwows has been transformed (if you squint a little) into a classical Rainbow Room, with candles on the tables and appropriate beverages. One night, the gifted young pianist Jeremy Denk accompanied Emma Bell in Mozart and Debussy songs, and also played Bach's Third English Suite. He's a powerful, intelligent musician, as severe in Bach as he is sensuous in Debussy. He is also a blogger, of all things. (His site, jeremydenk.blogspot.com, contains a soaring description of Messiaen's "Quartet for the End of Time.") A few nights later, Jean-Yves Thibaudet rode the elevator up to the Penthouse to give a mini-recital of Satie's first "Gymnopédie" and Debussy's Second Book of Préludes. Although Thibaudet's Debussy is a bit strict and dry for my taste, his musicianship is impeccable, and he has an easy, charming way of talking to the audience. When it came to the encore, he actually took requests: Chopin won over Ravel.

The Mostly Mozart team must have wondered whether people would really venture into the wilds of the Upper West Side at 10:30 P.M. No problem: both late-night concerts that I attended were standing-room-only. And the audience was noticeably younger than the one that showed up at Avery Fisher. Eight o'clock, the inviolable starting time for classical events, is, for a lot of us, an awkward hour; we'd rather be sitting down to dinner, not digesting. Younger people also reportedly shy away from the concerts because they are afraid of violating grandmotherly rules of decorum. The Mostly Mozart late-night series, casually serious in tone, raises the possibility that a large institution can carve out alternative identities, rather than try to please several demographics all at once.

Most concerts in big halls are two-dimensional experiences. The orchestra is so far away that it may as well be a projection on a screen; the sound has depth, but the image is flat. Change the perspective and the music changes, too. Last spring, I happened to sit in Row A, right in front of the orchestra, for a performance of "Tosca" at the Met. I could see the sweat on Aprile Millo's brow as she calculated each step into diva madness. Zeffirelli's grandiose sets soared on all sides, Roman grandeur incarnate. One gentleman in the brass section read a New York weekly while he waited for Scarpia's ominous sonorities to arrive. The man beside me whispered to his neighbor about the time he saw Callas; the prompter muttered the tenor's lines. I've never had more fun at the opera. ♦

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STRAIGHT UP

Emiliana Torrini's spare new album.

BY SASHA FRERE-JONES

When Emiliana Torrini was sixteen, and working in a caviar factory in a small town near Reykjavík, she asked a friend to help her record five pop and blues covers for her father on his fiftieth birthday. The friend persuaded Torrini to record some more songs—enough to make an album. They released it themselves—as "a joke," she says—and it became the No. 1 record in Iceland, where Torrini, the daughter of an Italian father and an Icelandic mother, grew up. Her subsequent career as a singer and songwriter has unfolded in a similarly fortuitous way. It almost didn't happen at all. In 1998, when she was twenty-one, she moved to London, where, a year later, One Little Indian, an independent British label, released "Love in the Time of Science"—her first album to reach an international audience. Inevitably, she was compared to Björk, Iceland's most famous (and equally tiny) female singer. A hazy, overblown production, the record situated Torrini's music uncomfortably between Björk's florid electronic arias and the nameless, oily tracks that you hear in the lobbies of boutique hotels.

In 2000, Torrini's boyfriend died, and she was mugged in broad daylight on a busy London street. For two years, she stopped making music. Then the director Peter Jackson, who had been given a copy of "Love in the Time of Science," invited her to sing "Gollum's Song"—a gothic bit of pap that Torrini's strong, glassy upper register almost saves—on the soundtrack of "Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers."

The experience inspired Torrini to begin work on a new album, "Fisherman's Woman," which came out here in April. While she was recording it, she was hired to write a song for Kylie Minogue, the spunky Australian singer who is ubiquitous in Europe. Torrini and her producer, Dan Carey, wrote the percolating dance number "Slow" in an hour, then repaired to a pub and got drunk. (Many of Torrini's anecdotes involve the words "joke," "accident," and "drunk.") Like Prince's nineteen-eighties hit "Kiss," the most stripped-down dance track ever to become a No. 1 single, "Slow" is audaciously reduced, a sliver of music that pierces the listener like a laser. Carey's electronic track is little more than a teensy drum pattern, a bass line, and a quick keyboard figure that sounds like a sun-dried version of the twinkling arpeggios in Donna Summer's "I Feel Love." Suspended above this skeletal foundation is a melody that unfolds within a single octave and is sung at the volume of a civil phone conversation. Torrini's lyrics tweak the well-worn conceit of the dance-floor seduction, though not so violently that they lose the necessary frankness. The best line is in the second verse, when she elegantly encapsulates what it feels like to meet somebody on the dance floor: "You know what I'm saying, and I haven't said a thing. / Keep the record playing."

Minogue sang "Slow" exactly as Torrini and Carey had recorded it on their demo. In September, 2003, the song went to No. 1 in England, and it earned Torrini more money than any track she has released herself. This is not as it should be. On "Fisherman's Woman," Torrini applies her minimalist algorithm with admirable ruthlessness to the overpopulated genre of mellifluous, well-meaning acoustic music. The album is as intimate and memorable as "Slow," though it sounds more like the morning after the dance, when someone tells you her life story, quietly but quickly, inches from your ear. The songs consist of Torrini's plangent, childlike voice and Carey's incantatory acoustic guitar, occasionally augmented by dashes of piano and subdued drumming. The unexpectedly upbeat single "Heartstopper" is conceived, like many of the songs on the

The singer, in Brighton, England. Her music magnifies the humble until it becomes sublime. Photograph by Jillian Edelstein.

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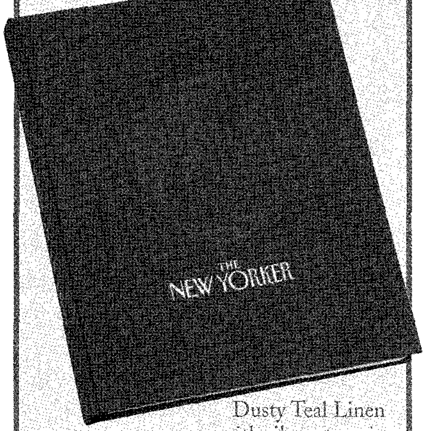

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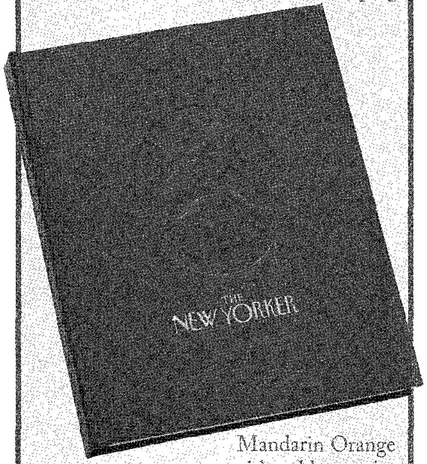

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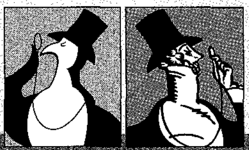

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album, as a letter—in this case to a former lover. Torrini sings calmly, able to see the wreckage but not inclined to do anything about it: "You said I began this messy state of love affairs. / That I drink too much and smoke too fast, that this city's cleared my innocence. / Coffee's pouring out my ears; it's the only thing they have in here. / And my heart stops beating." Her heart may be stopping, or broken, but she is reassuringly composed, letting the hum of her voice console her.

Torrini's lyrics are as spare and unpretentious as her music, and she's honest about her feelings. In the sprightly "Sunny Road," as guitars and keyboards eddy around her words, she sings to a lover with whom she has lost touch. There is desire in her voice, and regret, but where a less forthright performer might be inclined to quaver, Torrini holds firm: "I never married. / Never had those kids. / I loved too many. / Now Heaven's closed its gates." Throughout "Fisherman's Woman," she undercuts impending moments of sap with pinpricks of doubt.

The title track is perhaps the album's most restrained; it was not originally intended as a song. A month after her boyfriend's death, Torrini wrote him a letter, in which she imagined that he was a fisherman away at sea. She and Carey turned the letter into a dark ballad, bolstered by slow, torchy piano accompaniment. It's a song about patience that is never rewarded, but as Torrini lovingly enunciates each word—"Waiting for you by the window with the brightest red lipstick on my lips. / Just like Anna waits for her man. / How will I learn? I'll wait"—she makes her ordeal sound like pleasure. In "Lifesaver," we actually hear the boat that might take her away. She sounds like a cat stretched out in the sun, unmoving and fulfilled, and as she sings "Lifesaver, let's play a little game. / Catch me later, but make sure you'll be there late"—lingering ecstatically on the last word of each line—we hear the creaking of wood on wood, a field recording of a small boat rubbing against a dock. It's a bewitching sound, a no-budget effect that enhances the impression of contentment in her words. Magnifying the humble until it becomes sublime is what Torrini does best.

In June, she played a show in New York, at Joe's Pub. Freckled and alert, and wearing a white peasant dress with orange geometric patterns, she twisted from side to side as she sang with her three-piece band. She delivered each song with little fanfare, effortlessly switching from breathy, high-pitched trills to hearty, held notes in the middle register. Even when she closed her eyes a smile lurked. Between songs, she told the audience about how she had spent a year drinking with a friend and making no music, and she laughingly complained that she was "forced" by her label to include a song on her album by the late English folk legend Sandy Denny. (It is the one dull track on the record.) In Torrini's stories, as in her songs, things go awry, but they rarely merit fixing. Her steady voice and unadorned couplets are almost enough to convince you that you, too, should trust your life to chance.

After the show, Torrini led a group of friends to Sahara East, a Middle Eastern restaurant in the East Village, to a table in a back garden. There, after singing several verses of Guns N' Roses "November Rain" and expressing admiration for the rapper Snoop Dogg's "elegance," she insisted that her companions try the apple-flavored smoke from one of the hookahs that were available to customers. Then she challenged a tablemate to a drinking contest. Several bottles of white wine were consumed in the effort before Torrini catching her opponent in a yawn, declared herself the winner. As a friend celebrated by affixing gold-star stickers to Torrini's cell phone, her record-company chaperone gently reminded her that she was scheduled to perform at the Glastonbury music festival, in southern England, in less than twenty-four hours. Torrini shot him a dark look and said nothing.

"When is your flight?" someone at the table asked.

"I have no idea," she replied, unworried. ♦

BLOCK THAT METAPHOR
From the Times.

"It was a great month," Giambi said Tuesday. "I'll just keep working hard. I've still got a long way to go. I'm not going to cut back on any of my work. There's no time to rest on my laurels and smell the roses."

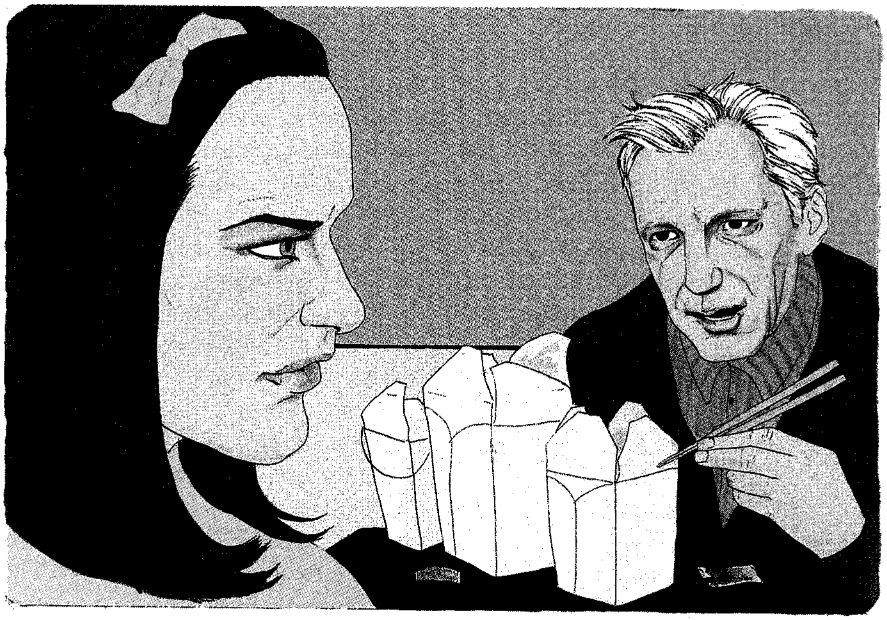
THE CURRENT CINEMA

DIRTY BUSINESS

"Pretty Persuasion" and "The Aristocrats."

BY DAVID DENBY

Kimberly Joyce (Evan Rachel Wood), the high-school vamp and evil genius in the new satirical comedy "Pretty Persuasion," tells her protégée, Randa (Adi Schnall), an Arab émigrée, that she, Kimberly, is glad she is white. Then she wonders what she would choose to be if she had to be something else. For Randa's benefit, she lists the possibilities in her order of preference: first Asian, then African-American (as long as she could have "Caucasian features," like Halle Berry), ending with Arab. Randa listens quietly, wide-eyed. The kids in "Pretty Persuasion" are perhaps the most barbaric group of bad seeds gathered together in recent movies. They turn candor into a form of aggression, they use sexual availability as a way of gaining power and demanding favors, and they boast of their friendships while working hard to annihilate any friend within reach. They're beyond hypocrisy—greed and narcissism have made them virtually senseless. The writer, Skander Halim, and the director, Marcos Siega, set the movie at a private school in Beverly Hills, and the kids are generic: they're good-looking, spoiled, manipulative, and so completely immersed in the media values of fame and celebrity that nothing else matters to them. "Pretty Persuasion" lampoons America in the era of omnivorous media coverage and reality TV, an America in which every young person wants to be a celebrity and will do whatever it takes to become one. Relentlessly barbed and often ice-cold, "Pretty Persuasion" is not a nice movie, and it's not as funny as it should be. But it's a fresh achievement: a dirty-minded poison-pen letter to a country swollen with self-esteem.



Evan Rachel Wood and James Woods as a Beverly Hills daughter and father.

For producers and audiences alike, satire is a notoriously hard sell. Yet despite such recent flops as James L. Brooks's semi-satirical misfire "Spanglish" and Todd Solondz's inept "Palindromes," this most difficult of dramatic modes seems to be gaining ground—in independent Hollywood, at any rate. Within the past decade, Gus Van Sant provided Nicole Kidman with her breakout role, as an aspiring newscaster, in

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"To Die For"; the team of Alexander Payne and Jim Taylor made their classics, "Citizen Ruth" and "Election"; and Brian Dannelly enjoyed minor success with the affectionate, teasing "Saved!," a comedy about a teen-ager who is impregnated by her gay boyfriend at a Christian school. Like "Election" and "Saved!" and the earlier "Heathers," "Pretty Persuasion" feeds its acrid jokes into the familiar genre of high-school comedy—a commercial stratagem that may be the only way to get these risky movies made. There's the usual assortment of hyper-competitive girls, loutish boys angling for the next bit of sexual service, and mealymouthed, hypocritical adults. But this movie is nastier, more profane, and more drastically stylized than such genre pictures as "Never Been Kissed" and "Mean Girls." No pieties are upheld, and there are no good people who need protecting or redeeming—even Randa, the victim, is presented rather heartlessly as a girl too passive to stand up for herself. Kimberly and her friends embroil a male teacher whom they dislike in sexual-harassment charges; he's innocent of the charges, though not of perverse impulses. No one is innocent in this movie. But the guiltiest of all—Kimberly—is the only character we come to care about.

Kimberly, at fifteen, manipulates everyone around her, and nothing can stop her, just as nothing could stop Reese Witherspoon's blandly vicious operator in "Election." In both movies, the filmmakers are clearly in love with the sheer energy and creative wickedness of their teen antiheroines, and they cast actresses who are attractive and charming enough to carry us along in their low tricks. The bitterness gets taken out of our distaste—these girls may be damned forever but they're something to see. Evan Rachel Wood, now going on eighteen, has been acting since she was a child. As the chaotic, badly parented, drug-taking kid in "Thirteen" (2003), she was eruptive—all movement and tears. But in "Pretty Persuasion" she's as poised as a princess—a pert brunette in a school uniform with a little bit of rose in her cheeks. Wood does flip cynicism with such precise, easy rhythms and with such obvious pleasure in naughtiness that she's impossible to hate. Halim and Siega help us out by making it clear that Kimberly is nearly an orphan—virtually abandoned by an absentee mother and a wealthy slob of a dad, who has a big belly and loose, flapping arms, and who turns out to be James Woods. He delivers an anti-Semitic tirade while eating moo-shu pork from a take-out container in his panelled dining room. Kimberly, fending off this noisy monster falls into trancelike silences in which what's left of her soul seems to be longing for some outlet in love or sweetness Wood shows moments of tenderness then she snaps out of it and gets back to the Devil's work.

Marcos Siega, a veteran of many music videos, highlights Wood's performance within calm, formally composed images—no rapid movement, no weird angles or rushed cutting. "Pretty Persuasion" is often as still as a painting (one of its most profane scenes is lit and framed like an Old Master). The sex is always photographed in the same way: the person receiving pleasure is seen clothed from the middle up, while the action takes place below, out of sight. After a while, we realize that, in almost every case, the person on the pleasure end of the transaction is actually being ruthlessly used by his or her partner. Repetition becomes a form of wit: lines from a porn movie the kids watch, or from a bit of overheard phone sex, get recycled as dialogue, reverberating uneasily in the air. The crassness of porn has soaked into the characters' lives; almost everyone is a caricature of one sort or another. The comedy is brutal and paper thin, but that is less bothersome than the ending of the movie, which abruptly changes its tone When the filmmakers suddenly attach lethal consequences to the comically foreshortened version of life that they've offered as entertainment, they are taking their own conceits too seriously and punishing us for enjoying their movie.

"Pretty Persuasion," which is about fresh-faced kids, was made in a fever of disgust. "The Aristocrats," which features the repeated telling of the filthiest joke in the world, exudes cheerfulness and expansive joy. As you've probably heard by now, this documentary is devoted to a gag from the good old (blue) days of vaudeville—a simple joke about a show-biz family, with a short setup, a two-word punch line, and an infinitely expandable middle section about the special nature of the family's act. Jay Marshall, a crusty comedy veteran, tells the joke in the briefest possible version. Then it is told by many of the greatest comics of today, each of whom, according to his or her tastes (and the girls are ust as foul-minded as the boys), adds lengthy variations, often with an emphasis on the excremental so extreme that it makes the work of that earlier standup comic François Rabelais look timid. Incest turns up (frequently), as does bestiality, mutilation, and necrophilia—indeed, the redolent middle section is exactly what makes the joke unrepeatable in public but infinitely repeatable backstage, after hours, among professional comics. The filmmakers—Paul Provenza and Penn Jillette, of Penn & Teller—interview the comics separately, but we get the sense of an insiders' competition that has gone on for decades, generating its special lore of joke-telling triumphs and disasters.

After we've heard three or four versions of the joke, the words no longer shock. They describe not acts but fantasies, and the movie becomes a celebration of the infinite varieties of comic style. The joke is told tenderly by Paul Reiser; urbanely by Martin Mull; seductively by the sublime Sarah Silverman; gravely and in loving, superfluous detail by George Carlin; and shrilly, with an emotion bordering on hysteria, by the inspired pixie Gilbert Gottfried. It is mimed (Billy the Mime), ventriloquized (Otto & George), juggled (the Passing Zone), and told in gibbering Swedish or German or something by Eric Idle, who hops around like an aroused chicken. Comics normally smothered under the blanket of family entertainment—Whoopi Goldberg, Jason Alexander, Bob Saget—come alive in wild-eyed bursts of obscene invention. Goldberg's version, which features a quartet of foreskins and a curious rendition of "Swanee," has to be the funniest thirty seconds of dirty comedy ever committed to the screen. In a flash, she and Saget go back to the emotional sources of their art—the sources of comedy itself—in rebellion and infantile aggression. Beneath the scatological fixations, one hears the long-postponed vengeance of a child forced to control its bowels, the rage of a grownup collared by social convention, the exasperation of a householder imprisoned by mate and children. Freudians associate such things as coprophagy with the death instinct, but the familiar obsessions, as they come off here, are so gleefully extravagant—another organ, another fluid, another outrage!—that one experiences them, on the contrary, as a desire to embrace life more fully, or at least to embrace talking about life more fully. The comics don't want to do these things—they want to tell about them. The telling is the madness expelled, an act of sanity that allows life to go on. ♦

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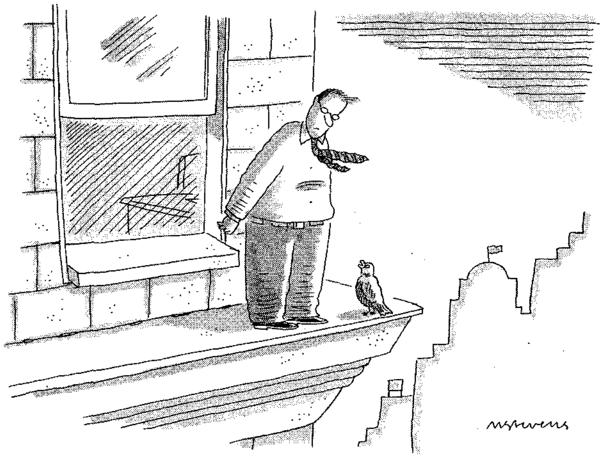
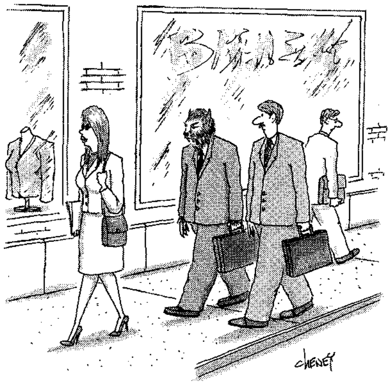
CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Frank Cotham, must be received by Sunday, August 28th. Finalists in the August 8th & 15th contest appear below; go online to vote. We will announce the winner, along with the finalists in this week's contest, in the September 12th issue. The winner will be given a signed print of the cartoon. Any U.S. resident age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit www.newyorker.com/captioncontest.

THE WINNING CAPTION



"And tomorrow I'll teach you how to build a nest."
Jeff Cronin, Warrington, Pa.



THE FINALISTS

"Oh, sure, they find one secretary in a pool of her own blood and everybody wants to blame the werewolf."
Sarah Bell, Marblehead, Mass.

"Four hundred grand in damages?
It was made out of straw, for Chrissake!"
Alix van Geel, Somerville, Mass.

"Yes, of course I've tried waxing."
Dorothy Daub, Philadelphia, Pa.

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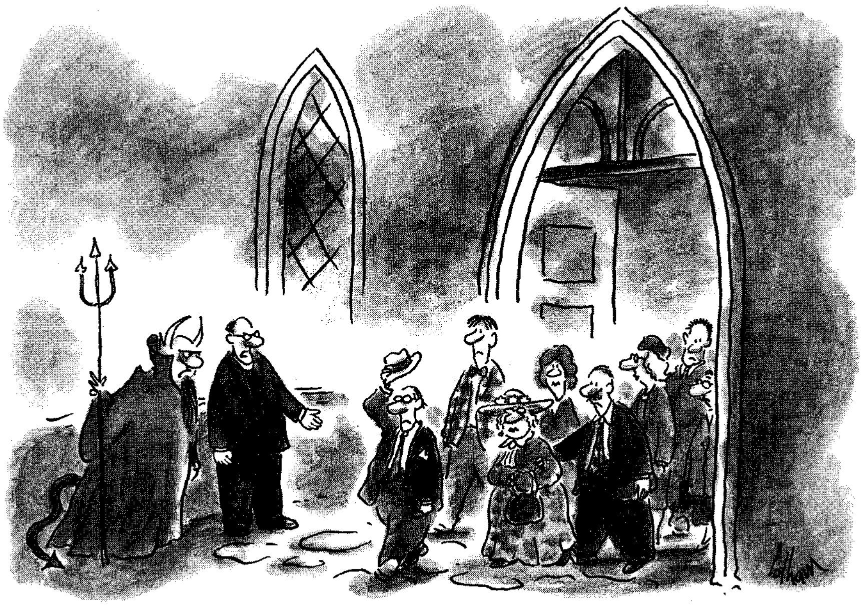

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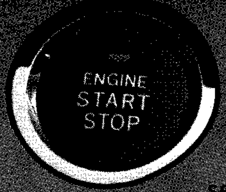

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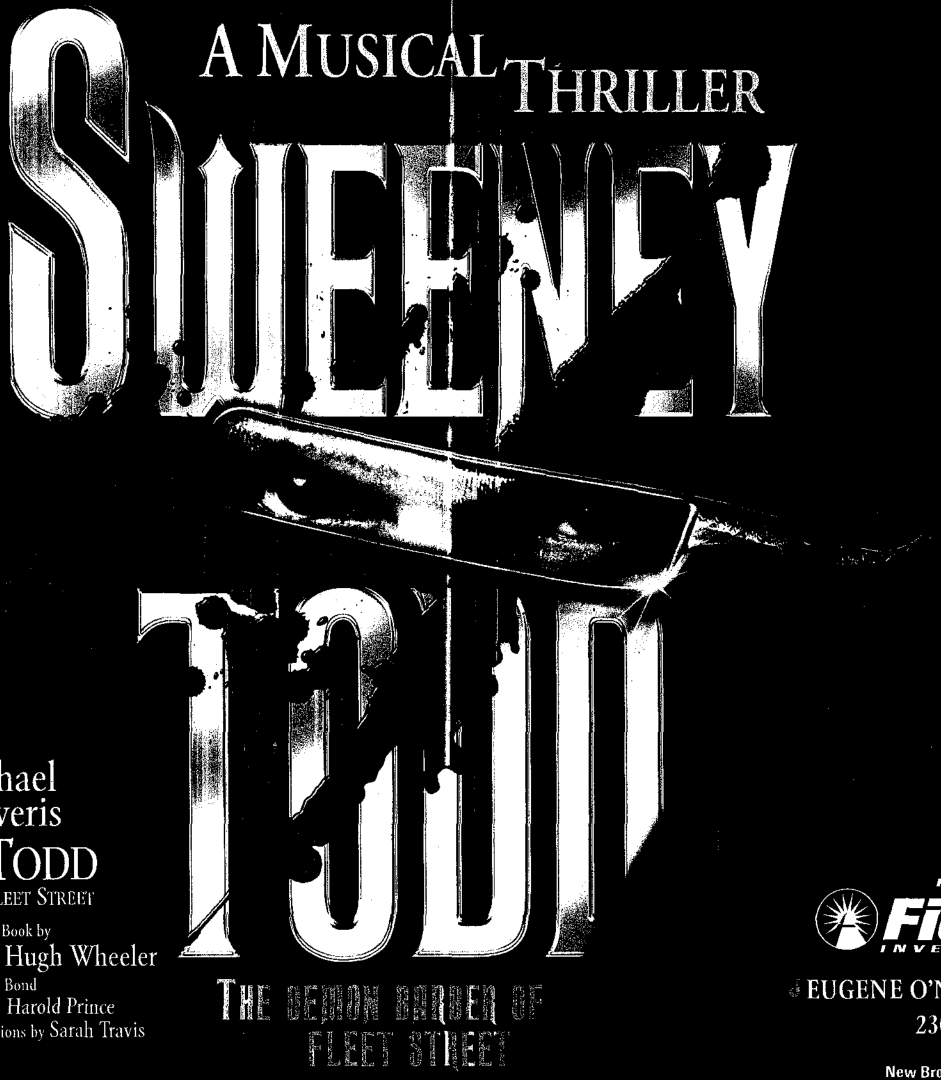

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